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MEMOIR  
OF  
SETH W. CHENEY,  
ARTIST.



BOSTON:  
LEE AND SHEPARD, PUBLISHERS.  
1881.

UNIVERSITY PRESS:  
JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE.



## DEDICATION.

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*To those of his Family who knew and loved him, every remembrance of him is precious.*

*To the Young, who knew him not in life, every revelation of his character will be welcome.*

**To Both I Dedicate this Memoir,**

*Sure that they will forgive its defects, if it brings him nearer to their minds and hearts.*

E. D. CHENEY.



## GENEALOGY.

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Rev. JOHN WOODBRIDGE, Stanton, England.

Rev. JOHN WOODBRIDGE came to New England, 1634.

Rev. BENJ. WOODBRIDGE went to Connecticut.

Rev. SAMUEL WOODBRIDGE.

BENJAMIN CHENEY.            RUSSELL WOODBRIDGE.

TIMOTHY CHENEY.            DEODATUS WOODBRIDGE.

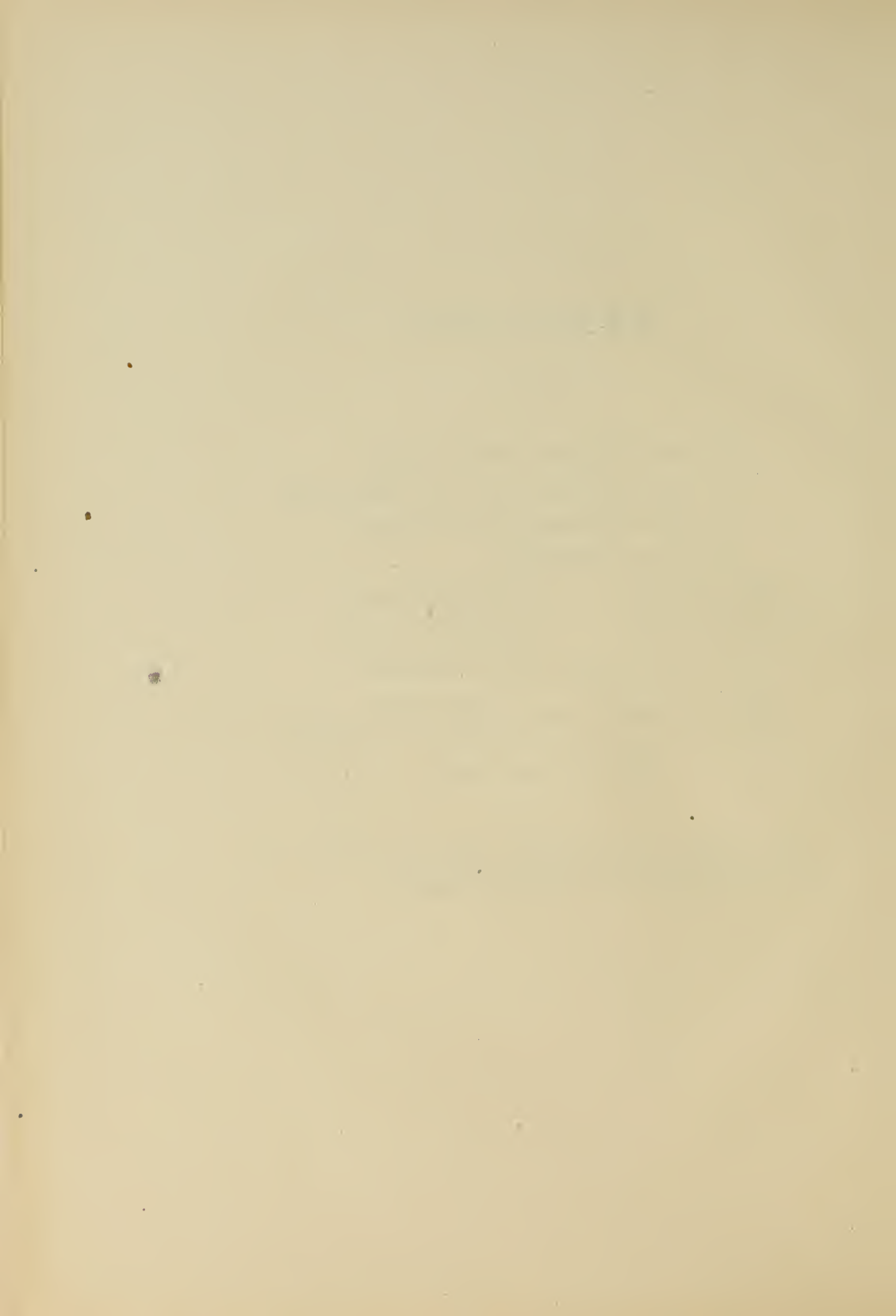
GEORGE CHENEY married ELECTA WOODBRIDGE.

SETH W. CHENEY married { EMILY PITKIN.  
  } EDNAH D. LITTLEHALE.

MARGARET SWAN CHENEY.

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Full particulars of the Woodbridge Family may be found in the  
"New England Historical and Genealogical Register."



# MEMOIR

OF

## SETH W. CHENEY.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD.

SETH WELLS CHENEY, born Nov. 26, 1810, was the fifth son of George and Electa Cheney.

So far as is known, this family is English on both sides, although a French, Swiss, or Italian origin of the name Cheney is not improbable, as that name still exists in all these countries.

The Cheneys can be traced with certainty only to Benjamin Cheney, who is recorded as buying and selling land in Hartford as early as 1723.

Timothy Cheney, his son, was a well-known clockmaker, who appears as one of the founders of Orford Parish, called before that time Five-Mile Woods, and afterwards East Hartford.

Burke's Encyclopædia of Heraldry gives a pleasant tradition of the origin of the crest of Sir John Cheney, — a bull's head, — which was adopted, partly in joke, by Cheney Brothers as a trade-mark.

The mother of Seth W. Cheney was Electa Woodbridge; and her descent is traceable to Rev. John Woodbridge, and also to Mabel Harlakenden, who came over from England and who is known as the ancestress of many of the leading families of Connecticut.

Electa Woodbridge's father kept a tavern in East Hartford, where she was born, and he afterwards removed to another tavern still standing on Manchester Green. Electa's own mother was of nervous temperament, and subject to fits of melancholy, then called the spleen, which kept her sometimes for weeks from fulfilling her duties in her family. At such times the care of the household fell upon the oldest daughter even at a very early age, and thus developed the self-reliance and capacity for work which distinguished her. After the mother's death, the father married her sister, who was the "grandmother" affectionately remembered by Seth and his brothers. He made a beautiful India-ink drawing of her, which is a model of serene old age. He loved to describe the aged couple coming down to visit their daughter, attended by their faithful Pomp. The dog always heralded their approach, for he understood the talk about going down to "Lecta's," and would start at once so as to arrive before them.

While Electa was yet living at the tavern, George Washington, then President, made a journey to New England on horseback, and passed through Manchester on his way to Providence. As the party halted at the little tavern, the young girl ran out to see them, and Washington asked her to bring him a glass of water, — a service which she always remembered with pleasure.

Timothy Cheney built a pleasant low house, now known as the Cheney Homestead, on the side of a hill in what was then called East Hartford Woods, or Orford Parish. A little brook ran before the house, affording a good water-power, and a high hill rose beyond it, making this a sheltered, lovely valley. He built a saw-mill on the brook, and took his son Timothy to live and work with him. They tried the first experiment in town of carrying water to a mill by a long canal. It was dug with wooden shovels plated with iron. He died in 1795. His son

Timothy returned to the Centre to live on the old place, while George remained at the Homestead.

George and Electa Cheney were married Oct. 18, 1798, and took possession of their home. One large room, called sometimes "t' other room," opened into a small porch by a door so wide that a hogshead could be rolled through it into the cellar opposite. There in winter the family lived, ate, and cooked by a large open fireplace furnished with crane and pot-hooks. In the summer a large back room was used for work. Two bedrooms opened out of the keeping-room, — one occupied by the father and mother, the other devoted to the boys as they grew large enough to leave their mother's side. The best parlor and chambers for guests were above; but as the house was built into a bank, the parlor opened out-doors by a pretty porch.

George Cheney was a man of strong, original, and noble character, in whose traits may be found the germs of those qualities which have given his sons success in life. He was slight in stature, of a quick, nervous temperament; and he possessed an active, inquiring mind, and very high moral qualities.

His scrap-book is full of thoughtful extracts on religious themes, showing him to have been a liberal Christian. He was called a restorationist. He was "always preaching." In his last illness he would sit up in bed and say, "Wife, if I could only preach, I'd tell the people what to do." When his sons heard Theodore Parker, they said, "How father would have enjoyed him!" He rarely went to church, but gave money liberally towards building the Methodist Church, and providing it with a bell; and when camp-meetings were held in his woods, he not only gave the use of the land freely, with pasturage for the horses, but often, when it rained, he would send for all the preachers to come to his house instead of letting them pass the night in the tents. Many of them stayed in the house. Although opposed to the popular views of religion, he was highly

respected in the town, where his judgment was generally deferred to. He was a justice of the peace, and "Squire Cheney" settled the quarrels of the neighborhood. He took a warm interest in temperance; and while he did not refuse his men the allowance of rum which was then considered a right, he abandoned the use of it himself, and gave higher wages to those who would do without it. He was very simple in dress, even objecting to shiny boots and hats, or to a bow on "mother's Sunday bonnet"; yet he was married in a yellow satin waistcoat and purple breeches, according to the fashion of the times. He disliked the custom of wearing mourning, and never followed it.

The water-power was successively used for a saw-mill, a grist-mill, and a fuller's mill. The father cultivated the farm, took prizes for wheat, and was careful to have an early vegetable garden. Watermelons were his favorite fruit, and he planted an acre with them, so that in the season a cartload was brought up to the house, a table set out, and family and neighbors were invited to partake of them freely. He took great pains to lighten the work of the household by many ingenious contrivances, and had a wash-house built by the brook, into which the water was led. He had no contempt for woman or her work, and never thought it unmanly to relieve his wife of the care of the baby. He wrote in his scrap-book:—

"God forbid that a woman should hold her peace because she is a woman. Methinks the Apostle meant no such thing, but meant that they should let their light shine before men."

The mother was a woman of fine, clear intelligence, strong feeling, and dignified character, but not demonstrative. She loved her children, and spared no pains for their welfare, but she never petted them. At first she did nearly all the work of the household. This included not only the cooking, cleaning, and washing for the family and two or three workmen, but the spinning, weaving, and dyeing or bleaching of the cloth, and the



making of nearly all the garments. She usually hired some help for the spinning and weaving. The wheat was raised on the farm, and the flour bolted in a large back shed, where many a poor neighbor came and received "a baking." The boys once reaped, threshed, and bolted the rye, and had the bread made and baked in the same day.

When the family became so numerous that it hindered her husband too much to care for the little ones while she cooked, she hired a girl. Sometimes her sister Mary or Esther or her niece Jane lived with and helped her. Lovisa Rich, a young relative, came there as "help" when Seth was two years old, and has been one of the household ever since. She was a great worker, and "Mother Cheney" and "Visa" have often done a baking after the others were in bed.

When the boys went to bed they threw out their jackets and trousers, rent by the labors and frolics of the day, and "Mother" put patch upon patch, sewing by the light of candles of her own dipping, and had all whole and neat for the next day.

What wonder that when Seth took her cold dead hand in his, he said, "How much this hand has done!"

The father and mother were in the habit of sitting side by side at one end of the table instead of on opposite sides, as parents usually do. The children sat in the order of their ages. If one were absent, the next oldest took his place.

Nine children came in pretty regular succession, about two years apart, — George Wells, John, Charles, Ralph, Seth Wells, Ward, Rush, Frank, and lastly, a little girl, the pet of all the eight brothers, Electa Woodbridge. The father had a fancy for naming all the boys with monosyllables. Seth was named for a relative, whose wife gave him the silver cup which he used in his last illness and left to his child on his death-bed.

Seth was endowed with less physical health and strength than any of his brothers. He said that his first remembrance was

of headache, and he recalled the special indulgences which were granted to his feebleness. He did not often in after life recur to his childish days. The grand struggle of life began early in his soul, and he was always an earnest, thoughtful child. He was more in the house than the others, and his nature drew him more closely to his mother, whom he did not scorn to help. When with the fond delight of a father he assisted in undressing his baby, as he warmed her little garments he was reminded how he used to "warm the clouts" for his mother, who had then no daughter to help her.

His first visit from home was to a cousin's (Mr. Blish) in Eastbury. The little fellow eagerly anticipated this pleasure; but homesickness overpowered him, and he was so unhappy that the old farmer took him on his horse before him and brought him home, where he arrived in a state of mingled mortification and delight.

He was sensitive, although not exactly timid. During his childhood a rat was one day chased about the room until it took refuge behind the clock. At night it escaped, and crawled over the sleeping boy. He was awakened by its touch, and lay paralyzed with fear as it dragged its cold tail slowly across his face. How long that tail was! He remembered this incident vividly in after life. He sometimes saw faces at the window. This sensitiveness probably prevented his childhood from being the happy, careless time it ought to be.

A little piece of Seth's writing remains, which he gave to "Visa": —

"When our parents and friends die and are laid in the cold ground, we see them here no more; but there we shall embrace them again, and live with them, and be separated no more; there we meet all good men whom we read of in holy books."

On the reverse is written, "L. Rich, you please to read this letter," with a date, 1820, and his name, Seth W. Cheney. It is

written on an old piece of paper, on which there is some illegible writing. The date, which would make him nearly or quite ten years old, accords pretty well with "Visa's" recollections; but the handwriting and spelling, unless copied directly, are remarkably good for that age.

The boys went about a mile to school, staying all day. Six good, large doughnuts apiece was their ordinary provision for luncheon. The winter school began immediately after Thanksgiving, and the thought of this was a drawback on the pleasures of that festival. Seth never loved school. A New England school of those days was a severe ordeal. The routine of study was dry and uninteresting, and the only discipline consisted in a blow for every breach of order. Seth had little intercourse with other children, and formed no strong attachments among his schoolmates, but ran home all the way as soon as school was out.

He often recounted a childish fault. He once told a lie. One of the older boys had a Testament, which was old, but the type was handsome, the binding pleased his fancy, and he liked to read from it. The owner of the book being absent, Seth took it to read from. It had a hole in the cover, which, after the manner of children, he picked at until he had visibly enlarged it. On his return, the owner complained to the master of the injury done to the book. Seth denied his deed stoutly, but in vain; he was punished by the master. This lie came not so much from fear of punishment as from a shyness of nature, which prompted him to concealment without any adequate motive. He would mend the quill pens, and shoot them across the school-room to his cousin. One of the teachers, for whom he felt affection, although he was rather a severe disciplinarian, was Colonel Brown, who survived his pupil, living to a great old age in South Manchester. Seth visited the old man and enjoyed him up to the close of his life. He often spoke of him as showing what varied stores of

thought may be gathered during the course of an obscure and laborious life, with few opportunities for literary or social culture.

One other summer teacher, Miss Keeney, — called by the children Aunt Melissa, — was much beloved by him. She finally became a bedridden invalid, but bore her great sufferings very patiently. Seth was in the habit of visiting her and carrying her pictures and flowers until the close of her life.

The boys had merry, happy times together. They helped on the farm, “raked after cart,” and did whatever was to be done to help father or mother. When it was “too wet to work outdoors, they went fishing.” Ward was as full of mischief as of goodness, and often played practical jokes upon Jane. Seth was her protector. He understood that it was real suffering for the poor child to be suddenly locked into a dark closet or kept in constant terror of a pistol.

He had a repugnance to both cats and dogs, and liked horses only moderately. He was full of mechanical invention, and made a machine for cutting profiles and a swift for winding yarn. He learned something of the cabinet-maker’s trade, and was always skilful in the use of tools. After he had been engaged in mental labor, such mechanical work was refreshing to him, and he would often say, “How pleasant it is to do something I can do !”

The father did not oblige the children to go to church, though they often went with their mother, but he said they must behave themselves on Sunday ; and they popped corn, or boiled wheat, or made candy, or cut out whistles, and did not engage in any noisy sports. But as the Connecticut Sabbath always began on Saturday at sundown and closed on Sunday at sunset, the boys ran to the top of the house to watch the setting of the luminary, and crying, “Sun’s down ! sun’s down !” went out, with a whoop and halloo, to vent their pent-up energies in the open air.

When some of his sons were converted and baptized, the father only remarked, that "it would not hurt them."

The housekeeping was liberal, and there was always a keg of molasses in the cellar which the boys could go to at pleasure. One day they were indulging in a candy frolic while the parents were away. The old bellows-top chaise could be seen a long distance up the lane, and one of the boys was stationed to give warning of its approach. Just as a large *spider* full of candy was about ready, the watch gave notice that father and mother were coming. A nicely buttered platter stood ready to receive the candy. Seth seized the spider to pour it out; but the paper holder slipped in his hand, and the spider and its contents fell on the floor, breaking the platter and scattering the sticky candy. Great was the scrabble to get all cleaned up and hidden away; and it was accomplished in time, and the broken platter was only discovered after a week or two, when the offence was outlawed by time.

Seth attended a higher school on the Green, kept by a college graduate, where he learned a little French and Latin, even reading Virgil. There was talk of his going to college and becoming a minister, but his school education ceased at this point.

When his father became ill, and anxious about his affairs, Seth had a soothing influence upon him. He would sit for hours patiently listening to his doubts and cares, and gently and cheerfully persuade him out of them into the belief that all was well.

His father died July 19, 1829. John had already gone to Boston, and was working as an engraver. Seth joined him there, and entered upon the same profession.

## CHAPTER II.

## ENGRAVING.

SETH'S earliest engraving extant is dated 1830. He studied drawing and perspective carefully with Mr. Smith, a very thorough teacher, and drew on stone with Mr. Pendleton. He lived with Mr. Pelton, in Hayward Place. John went to Europe, in June, 1830, and Seth remained in Boston studying and working.

Seth took great pleasure in the collection of casts and pictures at the Athenæum in Pearl Street, and accepted a position there as guardian of its treasures, which gave him opportunity for work and study. While here, in 1832, he engraved a picture of Allston's, the "Mother and Child," which was afterwards burned.

In 1832 he was ill with cholera in Boston, and was carefully nursed by a fellow-engraver, Mr. Hills, of Burlington, Vt. They were then at a hotel on Washington Street. They afterwards boarded together at Alonzo Heartwell's.

Mr. Hills describes Seth as

"Very young, slim, with a long face, a somewhat projecting chin, and firm lips. His eyes were most expressive, all soul. Hair light, silky, flowing, and voice clear. More poetry in him than in John. This appeared in the engravings."

Again he says : —

"He was fine ; never angry, not once. He was fond of humor, enjoying a good laugh. He used to say, 'The dinner is half a man's life.' They were both absorbed in engraving. No cards nor games interested Mr. Cheney, nor society, nor dancing. But he enjoyed ram-

bles in the country, particularly over Chesterfield Mt., where he fought a big rattlesnake, which escaped. He liked to be with friends and fellow-engravers."

His brother Charles, then in business in Providence, offered to supply him with money until he could support himself by his work.

Little record remains of these years, when his time was divided between his work in Boston, Brattleboro', and Hartford, and his times of refreshment at Manchester.

Mrs. Charles Cheney's letters give lively pictures of the home at this time, Sept. 18, 1831. She writes of Manchester:—

"I was delighted with your friends there. I love them all. So kind and hospitable, they all seem to form but one family. It seemed like the old patriarchal days, when all dwelt under one roof-tree. Seth is still at home. He has improved much in health since he went. He has just completed a very fine piece, the 'Dead Soldier.' You have seen the design, I suppose, a thousand times; but he has executed it in a superior manner. He improves very rapidly, I think."

Again:—

"Seth is at home recruiting. . . . An engraving that he has just finished—a scene from 'Guy Mannering'—is, I think, an admirable thing."

Again:—

"Seth's last engraving has excited a great deal of admiration. I think his improvement is wonderful. He spends the summer at home; appears to be in good spirits."

This picture from "Guy Mannering" appears to have been the one published afterwards in an annual as the "Invisible Serenader."

"MARCH 3, 1832.

"Ralph and Seth had just completed, last summer, a beautiful summer-house in the garden, entirely covered with a grape-vine that, for size and luxuriance, exceeded anything I ever saw. In the centre of it they had arranged an artificial fountain by the aid of the little

brook. It throws up the water about three feet, and in the evening has a brilliant effect.

“Seth is still at home, and is very well ; is at work for Goodrich.”

“JULY 25, 1832.

“Cholera year. Seth went to Boston a few weeks ago. He writes that he is well, but very homesick.”

LETTER FROM SETH TO JOHN, IN ENGLAND.

BOSTON, 22 July, 1831.

DEAR BROTHER, — I have not heard from you for a long time. How are you? Why don't you write? I suppose you are much engaged? What are you doing? Goodrich expects a plate from you every day. I think the one you have done is a splendid affair. So thinks every one who has seen it. I have done the “Dead Soldier” I mentioned to you. Have just finished it ; succeeded very well. I find the greatest difficulty in biting ; in laying, the ground does not hold. Can't get good ground here.

Gallaudet's health is very poor indeed. Tell you what we are going to do. I am going home, and he goes with me to try farming this summer and fall. I think there is nothing else will do him any good. He has been living in Charlestown this few weeks, but does not get any better, and now he says he makes this last effort. I think we shall have a good time there. He anticipates a good deal of pleasure. He has just finished a plate for Goodrich, from Fisher, — a fine thing, too. . . . I shall engrave most of the time, for Goodrich thinks there is not much doubt but that he shall go on with the “Token” next year, and I shall begin something for it ; the worst of it is, I can't find subjects. . . .

Dr. Doane is well. Miss Caroline and Eliza, Charles and his lady, Miss Binney and Wadsworth and myself took a trip to Nahant yesterday. Had a fine time amongst the rocks.

The next day after I wrote you from home, Richard Pitkin and one of John Willis's sons, about the same age, were drowned while bathing, which is two Uncle has lost in about a month.

I hope you will write more to us. I must beg pardon for not writing oftener, but I imagine you don't find mine hardly worth read-



ing. I can't find anything worth writing about is the d—— of it. Gallaudet says he will write you when he gets farming and better, which I hope will be soon.

Write.

Yours,

SEP.

Mr. JOHN CHENEY,  
No. 8 Buckingham Place,  
Fitzroy Square, London.

While engaged in engraving he spent some time in Brattleboro', Vt., where he worked for Holbrook and Fessenden, on a comprehensive commentary of the Bible. The work was a pecuniary failure, and I have never seen a copy of it.

#### LETTER TO HIS MOTHER.

BRATTLEBORO', 14th Saturday.

DEAR MOTHER,—I wrote on a paper\* last week that I was going to Vermont, and here I am. You will think, perhaps, rather strange of my coming to this place to engrave; but as there was a chance of getting employment for at least one year, and perhaps four or five, I thought I could not do better than come. The work I am engaged on is very profitable, and I am very pleasantly situated with Hills, who accompanied me from Boston. Ralph knows him. We room together, and board also. This is—or, rather, will be—a very pleasant place in the spring and summer, situated as it is on the banks of the Connecticut River, which winds along within a few rods of our office; and a lofty mountain rises on the opposite side of the river, which makes the view very fine. The steamboats run occasionally as far as here, which will make it easy getting home, which I shall do as soon as I get time,—by the first of May, I think, if not before; but I have said enough of myself.

I have had no letter from John since I have been in Boston, but heard, a few days before I came here, second hand, that he was in Paris, and well. I think we must hear from him soon. Perhaps he will bring news of himself.

Hurry, hurry!

SEP.

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\* Before the days of cheap letter postage it was very customary to send a newspaper on which a few words were written.

During these years Seth occasionally visited Providence, where his brothers Charles and Ward were living; and Charles speaks in letters of some efforts in oil-painting that both Seth and Ward had made, which he thinks very promising.

In 1831 or 1832 he walked with his brother Ward from Providence to South Manchester on a very hot day.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS FROM JOHN TO SETH.

BOSTON, Thursday, Nov. — (?).

DEAR BROTHER, — I got your letter day before yesterday. I have obtained twenty-five dollars from Bowen for you, which I send in this letter. I would send you more, but he desired very much that we should wait about a month longer. He has given me about forty dollars since I came here, and will continue to pay what we shall want for our expenses until then.

Since I wrote you I have got a picture of Mr. Allston's to engrave from. It is called "Beatrice." I don't know as you ever saw it; it is a head. I like it very much. Besides this, I believe they have not decided on any other subject. There is one by Newton, called "Don Quixote," which will no doubt be done. It has been offered to Galaudet, but he does not like it. 'T is, however, a spunky thing.

As for Pendleton, I do not know if he wishes to engage an engraver by the year or not. I have never asked him directly, nor has he proposed. They have, however, considerable work to do. They have desired that I shall do a number of things, and they wish, also, to engage you. I have not been able to find anything convenient to send to you. The "Token" people are determined to have their plates from original, and, if possible, from American painters.

I can't help thinking that it would be better for your health to work at home, if you could find it possible to get along with your plates there.

LONDON, Nov. 28, 1830.

If you are pleased with your situation in the Athenæum, I advise you to keep it; for if you should leave, I think you would miss the advantages you find there very much; for, besides the facilities for your own profession, the library and other things there make a valuable

mine of knowledge that cannot fail to be of great use to you as well as amusement. It is very well that you are going to practise drawing, but how or when do you intend to do it? It is a pity there is not convenience for drawing from the very fine collection of casts at the Athenæum. However, by often viewing them, and comparing their different parts, and one figure with another, you will almost insensibly acquire a correctness of eye and taste that will assist you in whatever you attempt to do.

I don't know as I am capable of giving you any instruction. I believe the greatest fault, from first to last, that one is liable to fall into, and is the most to be guarded against, is a disproportion of the different parts of the figure, or whatever object you are drawing; and I think the only way to avoid it is to keep the eye upon the whole object, and lightly touch in the main points and most characteristic portions of the form, and when you find that they are right and you have blocked in the whole correctly, you can proceed to the detail with some certainty of success, and save much labor and disappointment. A good and forcible outline, you must know, is everything; the rest is comparatively mechanical and easy.

As for shading, I believe it is as well to use the stump first as afterward; in hatching or scumbling, it is not necessary to be so very careful as it otherwise would be. It is well enough, no doubt, to give some effect by lines, and in that way acquire a habit of laying them in with more ease and freedom on your plate; but it is not well to use them in your drawing, for it will cause you unnecessary pains. Do it only for a general idea. It saves a good deal of time to use tinted paper and white chalk for the strongest light. As I thought you could not get it in Boston, I have sent some, directed to the care of Mr. Goodrich. . . .

I advise you to learn music on some instrument. You will find it a great solace; besides, I think it of some use to an artist. . . .

I conclude by what you say that you are getting on famously with your engraving. Go on, but don't run too fast. Strive to work in a neat and simple manner, and yet be very careful never to sacrifice the true character for mechanical beauty. Anything that deserves the name of style comes from a perception of the effect which different lines produce, such as cold or warm, smooth or rough, clear or obscure, &c.; and by observing these effects and attending to them, I think we

shall certainly get into the right way ; but, like color in painting, that ought to be a secondary consideration, the form and expression being always first. Study good painting and prints. It is not well to attempt work in small things (as to style) ; look out for the general effect. . . .

I have not become acquainted with many people here. I have seen Mr. Leslie, and am very much pleased with him. He has given me a ticket to the lectures at the Royal Academy. As for me, I am pretty well situated ; am engaged engraving at my lodgings during the day, and I attend at a drawing academy during the evening ; am getting on tolerably well. My eyes are troublesome, but they get no worse. My health is very good.

Your affectionate brother,

JOHN.

John remained a year and a half in England, and then went to Paris, where Seth joined him in April, 1833, and was engaged in studying drawing and in engraving. He studied with the French painter Isabey, and worked with George L. Brown, the landscape painter.

He made the acquaintance of M. Dubourjal, an excellent miniature painter, with whom he formed a lasting and cordial friendship. Both brothers boarded with him, — once in the Rue Vivienne, and again in the Rue St. Antoine. He was a man of singular sweetness and beauty of character. He painted a miniature of Seth in 1834, which is the only picture remaining to give an idea of his youthful beauty.

While in Paris, Seth engraved, with John's aid, for Mr. Goodrich, a plate called the "Young Savoyard," worth two hundred dollars. This was lost at the bankers' in a way never accounted for. It was a serious loss to our struggling young artists.

He visited Rouen during this trip, and was greatly delighted with its cathedrals.

John and Seth both studied in De la Roche's atelier. It was then the custom for the students to receive new-comers with

tricks and jeers similar to those pranks called hazing at college. This practice was carried so far as to cause the death of a student, which led De la Roche to close his atelier; but Seth sat quietly at his work, and received no annoyance from the pupils. He had a great respect for De la Roche, and valued highly a fine engraved portrait of him.

He worked very hard and lived very scantily, breakfasting on a cup of coffee and a roll, and often working until night without other food, when he took perhaps only bread and a glass of *vin ordinaire*. Fasting always excited his brain, and he worked with great delight. But towards spring his strength began to fail, and he had so severe a pain in his side that he consulted a physician, who applied blisters. He did not gain under this treatment, and was advised to go to Fontainebleau and drink asses' milk. He boarded with a Madame Elizabeth, who was very kind to him; and an old man brought the ass up to the window every morning and drew the milk for him to drink.

He still remained so feeble, however, that John came to Fontainebleau and decided to take him home. They went by sailing vessel, about May 12, 1834, and had a long passage. Their principal food was baked potatoes, which were very good. Seth used to describe one old lean turkey which was killed and boiled for a treat on the voyage, but which proved to be very stringy.

He improved greatly in health during the voyage; but he referred much of his subsequent physical suffering to this early illness.

Mr. Crossman says:—

“The first plate which he engraved—a copy, I think, from one of the illustrations of the *Waverley Novels*—was as exquisitely done as it could have been by the most experienced and skilful artist in the country, showing no mark of the equivocating hand of a novice, but every line and dot exhibiting the firm, decided, yet delicate tone of a master. The expression, too, of the *whole* picture, as well as the mi-

nutest detail, was wonderfully preserved. I well remember that the old engravers, on hearing the facts, were perfectly amazed by this work, and considered it a miraculous performance."

This refers, probably, to the engraving from "Guy Mannering," in Parker's edition.

"When John and Seth went to Paris, about the year 1831 or 1832, with several commissions from S. G. Goodrich for engravings for the 'Token,' I recollect that the engraved plates came home without having any name to intimate by whom they had been engraved. Mr. Goodrich wished, for obvious reasons, to have the name of the engraver attached to each plate; and being unable to decide which was John's and which Seth's work, he brought the plates and proofs to several engravers, to see if we could tell whose name should be placed on the different plates. All confessed that we could not decide with any certainty. The engravings were all excellent, and of very nearly equal merit as artistic productions, but all ventured to 'guess' that one was probably the work of John, because it appeared a *trifle* more masterly than the others. The plates were published, however, with the name Cheney alone, no one daring to risk his reputation by deciding between them. When the brothers returned from Paris, it was found that the finest engraving was the work of Seth.

"All Seth's engravings, like his drawings, whether portraits or landscapes in crayon, have a charming sweetness and beauty of expression very rarely met with even in the best productions of the best artists. The effect of his work is to produce the same pleasurable thrill, or something nearly akin to it, we experience in the best examples of Grecian art, — an emanation of beauty which almost entrances the beholder, that makes 'the sense ache.'"

Mr. Schoff also speaks of the wonderful facility with which Seth gained a mastery of the art of engraving.

This anecdote shows the close relation between the brothers, whose whole artistic life was so interwoven that it is difficult to separate it. When some one asked Seth why he thought so much of John, he replied, "Why, he taught me all that ever I knew."

The number of his engravings is not large. The subjects are usually simple genre pictures, as the "Soldier's Widow" and the "Pilot Boy." As it was difficult to procure good subjects at that time, some of his engravings were copied from English or French prints.

## CHAPTER III.

## WESTERN LIFE.

ON his return from Europe Seth remained for some months mostly at Manchester. He and Frank worked on the farm and built a house for their brother Ward, doing most of the work with their own hands, and much of their own cooking, besides. Seth always referred to it as a very happy time, and his health was particularly good. He was not then seriously engaged in any artistic work.

May 31, 1835, he started on a tour to Niagara Falls, the Upper Mississippi, and St. Louis, with his brothers Ralph and Charles.

They went by canal from Albany to Buffalo, and from Buffalo to Niagara by stage. At Niagara the ice was piled up in the river thirty feet thick, and the spray had formed a perfect arch of ice, making a most brilliant spectacle. Seth was so excited that he rushed out upon the ice and swung his hat with delight. He was soon obliged to retreat, for he was drenched to the skin with the cold spray. They returned to Buffalo, and from thence to Cleveland, by steamer; from there to Cincinnati, to Louisville, on horseback, and from Louisville by boat to St. Louis. At St. Louis they had relations, with whom they stayed. From St. Louis Charles and Seth went up the Mississippi on a boat, living on board.

ST. LOUIS, June 12, 1835.

DEAR BROTHER, — As you must have expected, I have kept my promises with usual punctuality! The last time (and the first too) I



wrote you was from Niagara Falls, in great haste. The fact is, we have been going ahead so fast, since we left home, that I have had hardly an opportunity of saying a word. After leaving the Falls we went to Buffalo, and from thence to Cleveland in Ohio, and crossed to Cincinnati by land — and a hard time we had, too — the roads were almost impassable, we broke down and rode on a rail all one night; think of that! The scenery is monotonous, very level till we get toward the Ohio River, where it improves; but, take it all in all, I was disappointed. The land is fine, very fertile, which is about all can be said. Other parts, from what we have seen, may, however, be more picturesque. I was particularly pleased with Cincinnati; it fully realized my expectations. The situation is rather picturesque, and the country round the most agreeable that I have seen anywhere in this Western world. At this place we purchased horses; but, finding the roads in so very bad a state, and the weather very hot, we rode no farther than Louisville, Ky., crossing, at Madison, the Ohio River. The view of this place from the hills, or rather bluffs, as they are called here, was truly splendid; it reminded me of the view of Rouen, imagination supplying the city. Louisville is a “right smart place,” as the Kentuckians say. There is more “go ahead” about it than I have seen in any other place. There is a “heap” of business done here, but it has the slovenly appearance of all the cities in slave States, and the streets are neglected entirely. We disposed of our horses here, and took steamboat for Shawneetown, Ill. I found on board Mr. Brimmer, of Boston, bound up the Tennessee River, travelling for his health, which is very bad. Stopping at this place, we intended crossing Illinois by land; but, the roads being almost impassable from the great quantity of rain that has fallen this spring, we embarked on board the first boat that passed bound for St. Louis. Passing down the Ohio River, the scenery is the most monotonous and dull of any I ever saw. Every turn of the river presented the same scene. I am compelled to say the same of the Mississippi River, though it is on a larger scale. About half-way between the mouth of the Ohio and St. Louis, on a tremendously dark and stormy night, we ran foul of a snag, breaking at the same time our shaft. We were in about thirty feet of water, with perpendicular banks about the same height; but fortunately the *Metamora* steamer happened to be passing, and towed the boat ashore. As she had but few passengers, we exchanged, leaving hers on board our boat, to be taken by another, which they knew

would be passing in the course of the night, and returning with us to St. Louis, by which accident we arrived there much sooner than we should have done by the other boat. I was not much pleased with this place. We stopped here but a short time, and passed up the Illinois River and visited some of the principal places in the interior of the State, saw a prairie for the first time here, spent about a fortnight in Illinois, and returned to St. Louis day before yesterday. We slept at Major Bissell's last night. He has the pleasantest situation that I have seen in this country. We are bound now for Galena, up the Mississippi. Ralph returns home across the country. I have no more time, as the boat leaves in a moment.

SEP.

Charles left Seth here, who went up to the Falls of St. Anthony, and round by the Sault St. Marie. He made a beautiful series of pencil sketches, which were unfortunately loaned to a friend and burned. He was much amused with the mixture of barbarism and civilization among the Indians, one of whom he found sitting with nothing on but a silk stock, and an umbrella.

In the autumn of this year, 1835, Charles proposed to go out West, to engage in farming, and Seth decided to accompany him, hoping that the change of climate and the more active life would establish his health. They went to Cincinnati, and spent the winter there, engaged in finding a good location. Seth had been interested in the vegetarian idea, and during the winter he lived mainly upon bread and apples.

Charles writes:—

“Seth and I have been very busy in looking out a place to settle, but among so many good things it is difficult to make a choice. We have not, however, lost anything by delay, for we find places more and more desirable, every day. We are out every pleasant day, and mostly travel on foot. We find this the best way to get about. It will prepare us to follow the plough when the time comes.”

His most congenial companion here was Mr. Beard, the painter. In the spring of 1836 he went, with his brother Charles, to Mulberry Grove, at Mt. Healthy, Hamilton Co., Ohio. Mrs. Charles

Cheney, born Waitstill Shaw, of Providence, R. I., was a woman of great refinement and intellect, as well as both gentle and lively in disposition, and Seth found great pleasure in her society. Her letters give a vivid idea of life in this new country.

They found a good house on the place, and at once settled there to begin their farming. Seth took a very active part in all the farm work. They engaged in the business of planting mulberry-trees and rearing silkworms, and Mrs. Cheney speaks of the house as being full of the worms, and of finding them a great deal of care. The mulberries thrived wonderfully, however. Seth's health was very poor during all his Western life, though he never had the malarious fever and ague of the country. He had one severe attack of sickness, and bled himself with a penknife; the bandage got displaced, and he came very near bleeding to death.

He made a few sketches and paintings here, and his nephew, then a boy of five years old, remembers him as working in a dim, dingy room, with slices of mouldy brown-bread to rub out his drawings, and also as getting the common clay of the country and moulding it into various shapes.

Among the few pleasant neighbors were the sister poetesses, Alice and Phoebe Cary, for whom he always expressed much admiration and regard.

The household was deeply saddened by the death of two of Charles's children, from the effects of whooping-cough. Mary died, May 9, in Seth's arms, and in just one month Sarah followed. Mrs. Cheney speaks of Seth's grief for the children, and he never forgot them. They were buried in Ohio, but, years afterwards, the bodies were removed to South Manchester, and laid in the family burial-lot. It was found that a vine had grown into the coffin containing Mary's body, and completely filled it. Mrs. Harriet Cheney writes, 1850: "When Seth was told of the vine shooting its roots downward into the coffin of little Mary, and forming a network over her body, he burst into tears and sobbed like a child, saying, 'The beautiful vine took care of the

little one, and protected her body from harm.'” Mrs. C. Cheney writes of the children’s death and of Seth’s love of them, and adds: “You must not repine that Seth is not with you. Think what a comfort he has been to us; I know not what we should have done without him. He is infinitely better than last fall.” His mechanical ingenuity found full scope in contrivances for the comfort of the household. He built with his own hands the reels for reeling the silk used by the family, and made churns and nearly all the wooden ware which they could not buy.

Charles went very extensively into the planting of mulberry-trees. He speaks of planting three thousand white-mulberry trees, which he bought at the low price of twenty dollars a thousand, — fine, large, thrifty trees. The soil and climate suited them well, and they grew much faster and larger than in New England. Seth took his full share in all the farm work and in the household anxieties, and undoubtedly exhausted his strength in this life of labor with little recreation.

Mrs. Cheney writes: —

“Seth must not be stationary; he cannot be, without working beyond his strength. He must be kept travelling for the good of the concern. I miss him very much; he was so domestic, always at home, and always kind and obliging. I miss him daily about many little jobs which none could do as well as Sep. Old Mrs. H. says, ‘There is nobody I want to see so much as Seth. When will he come?’ and so with others.”

The simple beauty of his character and his rare power of winning affection were fully shown here. Even now the few old neighbors still living at Mt. Healthy remember him better than any of the family, though they knew nothing of his genius as an artist.

Charles writes: —

“How is grandmother? We have her likeness, one of those that Seth painted, — so very like her, it seems as though we had her with us. We value it very highly, and shall keep it for our children.”

His brother Rush spent the winter of 1836-37 with them, and the silk-raising went on prosperously, but the life was lonely and hard. They often made long journeys on horseback, but did not once go to Cincinnati, though only nine miles distant, on account of the bad roads. Seth had little intercourse with the neighbors, but spent his Sundays in roaming over the fields. His health did not improve, and in September John went out and took him on a journey to the Upper Mississippi, the Falls of St. Anthony, and the lakes.

LETTER FROM JOHN TO HIS MOTHER.

"Friday we rode into Cincinnati, walked about a great deal, and about half-way home Seth fatigued himself, and was not so well the next day. He is pretty well now, and I think he might get quite well if he would take proper care of himself; but as soon as he gets strength enough to get about, he immediately wastes it all by working too hard, and as long as he is here, I don't see how he can avoid it, for there seems a great deal to be done, and it makes him very uneasy to see it neglected. I am afraid he can never get well if he remains here, and yet it seems as though Charles and Waitstill could not get along without him, or some of their friends to stay with them. Waitstill writes: 'It would be a hard trial to part with him, even for a short time, his kindness has endeared him to us so much.'"

A sketch in oils of Lake Pepin, made on one of these Western trips, is in the old clock at South Manchester. He was in Manchester in October, somewhat improved in health, and went in November to Burlington, N. J., where his brothers Ward, Rush, and Frank were then engaged in efforts to raise silk, and spent the winter there, boarding in the village. It was a very warm winter. He went often to Philadelphia; he enjoyed the society of his friend Mr. Edward Arnold, and his father, and Mr. Cephas Smith. In the summer he took, with John, an excursion to the beautiful Delaware Water Gap.

## CHAPTER IV.

## SILK CULTURE.

AT this time the fortunes of the family had become fully involved in the business of silk culture. At first the mulberry-trees were raised for the purpose of feeding the worms, and thus procuring a supply of silk at home. This subject had engaged the attention of the Colonists even before the Revolution, and Congress had offered bounties on the raising of silk. Connecticut had taken an active interest in the work. Charles Cheney engaged in the business of rearing worms at Mt. Healthy, Ohio. Ward, Rush, and Frank attempted the same thing in Burlington, N.J., and even in Georgia. But the real demand for trees for the use of the worms grew into a wild speculation, which spread all over the land, and the original planters found it more profitable to raise trees for sale than to rear the worms and manufacture the silk.\*

While the Cheney's entered into the business of raising mulberry-trees for sale, they never lost sight of the original purpose of fostering the silk manufacture in America. Perhaps even now silk-raising might become a profitable branch of industry in some parts of America, if conducted by proper methods; but its culture requires an industrious, painstaking agricultural population, all of whom shall take a share in the work.

While Seth Cheney never forgot his vocation as an artist, he entered into the plans of his brothers, and his mind was for

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\* For particulars, see Brockett's "Silk Industry in America," and a pamphlet on "The Silk Industry of the United States," by A. T. Lilly.

some years occupied with this subject, which had a decided influence on his life. One is tempted to regret the time taken from artistic studies; yet he perhaps gained physically from this more active life, and certainly, by the close union of interests with his brothers, he not only enjoyed the richest blessings of brotherly love and communion, but, by sharing their final financial success, he was relieved from all pecuniary care when his own power of work failed. No one cared less for money for its own sake than he, — he was always its master, not its slave, — but his keen sense of independence and honor prevented him from ever falling into pecuniary embarrassments such as have ruined the lives of many artists. His simple tastes never led him into extravagant habits, and he was generous but not lavish in his relations to others.

By the desire of their brothers, and at the expense of the company, Seth and Frank went to Europe, in October, 1837, to purchase mulberry-trees. During the voyage he kept a journal, and as his brothers published a paper, called "The Silk-Grower," he took pains to send them home valuable letters for it, and thus we have a fuller account of this part of his life in his own words than of any other. I shall leave him, therefore, to speak for himself.

First comes a memorandum of things to be done in New York. It was a custom of his, on going anywhere, to make a list of all he wished to do. Then he was not obliged to think of affairs, and was left free from care until the time came to attend to them.

"I have occasionally, during the passage, noted down what appeared worthy.

"After crossing the bar at Sandy Hook, the pilot left us. Immediately the captain ordered all sails to be set. With wind fresh and fair, we are ploughing the sea at the rate of ten knots an hour. The Highlands of Nevesink are fast sinking beneath the horizon, and as

we look towards the setting sun, 't is a long faint line that slowly fades away, and as night closes in, 't is gone perchance to us forever. Tomorrow, as our eyes involuntarily turn towards our country, they will rest on a wilderness of waters.

“Just before sunset the passengers who had been enjoying themselves on deck disappeared one by one, till I found myself alone. Concluding that some important business was to be attended to, then I went down, and found the table spread with the most tempting viands and wines of all sorts. One passenger, solitary and alone, was making terrible inroads on the carcass of a roast turkey and a bottle of champagne, as though being at sea and eating was no new business to him. As I passed along near the cabin, strange sounds came from within the staterooms on either side, such as people make sometimes after taking violent emetics; it seemed as though some were casting up their very *soles*. I began myself to feel queer about the region of the stomach, and made the best of my way to my berth, leaving the solitary passenger to finish his pudding, and wondering how it was possible that men should ever think of *eating*, the very idea of which was sickening to me, absolutely determined not to commit such injury to my stomach. Had not been long in my berth before the cook, the black rascal, came asking if we would have some dinner — some soup. Oh, bah! don't mention it — don't talk to me about soup. I never eat soup, and never mean to eat anything else after this. Soup, bah! give me the dish — quick! quick! — now go and shut the door!

“Sunday morn rose glorious and cool, — one of those smoky Indian summer days, with a warm breeze from the Gulf Stream, just a studding-sail breeze. It is a luxury to lie in the sun on the pile of cotton bags, covered with an old sail-cloth, before the mainmast, and hear pigs squeal and the sheep bleat and the hens cackle, — equal to the sunny side of a hill in the spring, — and then to look off on the broad ocean, its blue waves tinged with the warm mellow light of an October sun, blending sea and sky with a rich golden tone.\* The sun set behind a dark shadowy cloud which came driving furiously on, accompanied with storms and lightning and wind and rain, before which we have run for thirty-six hours. Last night the sea ran very high, the wind having changed more to the westward, driving before it thin,

\* Frank talked about the sunny side of a hill, and picking up chestnuts on Nebo.



white fleecy clouds, through which the moon courageously shone clear on the dark waves' breast; silvering their foaming crests as they rushed wildly along, relieved against the black clouds that lower along the horizon.

"I never saw one enjoy a voyage so much as Frank. He had not been on board six hours before he settled his accounts with old Neptune, and the first morning ate his breakfast with as great a zest as he ever did at home. Last night, as the ship rolled and pitched incessantly, when I found it quite an effort to keep in my berth, Frank slept in his berth in the same room, snoring continuously as a child resting quietly in its cradle, while I was counting the weary watches of the long night. How inestimable is health, that enables one so easily to conform to the changes of place and circumstance!

"Our course lies along the edge of the Gulf Stream. There seems to be a continual conflict between the winds, — one day blowing steaming hot from the south, and the next piercing cold from the opposite direction; and since we left New York we have had a succession of gales, which make the voyage a very unpleasant one at this late season, though generally a quick one. We have been out but eight days, and are far beyond the Banks of Newfoundland, nearly half the passage made, and shall probably be in Havre by the 13th, — at least, so the captain says.

"After the tremendous blow of last night had fairly subsided, a capsized long-boat passed close alongside of the ship. It might have been only washed by a heavy sea from the deck of a ship, but the imagination will be busy picturing how, when all hope of safety had fled in that sinking ship, her fated crew had trusted in this last frail hope, and that too has failed, and they have all gone down and lie amid the fearful wrecks that strew the slimy bottom of the deep.

"We have been out now ten days. Still I am sick. I never had before over three or four days' sickness. I have not yet eaten a full meal, or had a night's rest. I am surprised that some plan is not devised for ventilating the cabins of ships. I am persuaded nothing would conduce more to the health and comfort of the passengers. While on deck breathing the pure and free air of the ocean, the thought of going below to inhale through the long night the mouldy confined air of the cabin is absolutely nauseating, and nothing but the cold and fatigue drives one to his berth. Some few, with myself,

complain, but the majority are of that unfortunate class that perceive no distinction between the foul contagions of a dungeon and the free air of heaven.

“These fishermen on the Banks of Newfoundland have a terribly hard life of it. There goes one that has been blown off his fishing-ground by the severe gale of last night. Little do we think, when we sit quietly in our houses and eat codfish for our Saturday’s dinner and Sunday morning’s breakfast, of the storms and perils the poor fishermen encounter to procure for us this luxury.

“We have breakfast about nine o’clock, with fresh baked bread, buckwheat cakes, excellent coffee, with hot milk, etc.; lunch or *déjeuner à la fourchette* between twelve and one; and the dinner-table at four is spread with as great a variety as that of any hotel on shore. In a small ice-house on deck are stowed away beef, mutton, and poultry in sufficient quantity to supply the table during an ordinary voyage, and no encroachments are made on the live-stock of the ship except in case of necessity. There are on board some French sheep that have made five or six voyages; all stock are said to do poorly the first voyage except geese and ducks, who delight in the sea. The poor turkeys make the most sorry figure of it; you may see them sit moping the livelong day with half-closed eyes, and the corners of their mouths drawn in, pouting disconsolately, as much as to say, ‘We are gone turkeys;’ in fact, they seem to be lineal descendants from that celebrated stock of Job’s. Here is the old cow, too; how wistfully her eyes wander over the waste of waters, as if in search of some green pastures! And the way those sheep would skip about the sunny side of a hill and the pigs scud in my neighbor’s clover patch would be a luxury to look upon, indeed. One cannot help feeling a sort of sympathy for the dumb animals that man has subjected and deprived of their freedom.

“This is the thirteenth day out; for the last five days we have had a continual gale and squalls from the cold north, the sea very rough, no comfort on deck (the passengers confine themselves to the cabin). Many of them, like myself, are sick; there are some that have not made their appearance at table since embarking. Yesterday it fell dead away to almost a calm, which induced all to come on deck to enjoy the morn and sunshine, some looking wan and woe-begone from protracted sickness and confinement to the close air of the cabin and long fasting. Among them you might have seen a fellow about my

height, with long locks, sunken eyes and cheeks, and spindle shanks, stalking about like an atomy (a fair representative of Shakespeare's apothecary); in fact, I am wasted almost to a skeleton, but still am free from pain, feel none in my chest or side. I expect the way I shall extend my dimensions when I get on shore will be a caution to Jack Falstaff.

"There was last night the most splendid rainbow spanned on a dark cloud which I ever beheld, and I have observed most glorious ones on land, yet I never saw one in which the colors appeared so distinct and vivid. The sun was low, which raised the arc very high in the heavens, relieved with dazzling brightness from the dusky red clouds piled up in vast volumes still higher, — they alone, independent of the arc, presenting a sublime spectacle; and where the bow touched the water there was a mingling of a thousand tints which you might trace even close to the side of the ship, so that to one standing at the mast-head it must have appeared a complete circle of the most brilliant colors. The white sea-gulls were flying high and wildly, and the porpoises playing their frantic gambols below, all betokening a coming storm, which reached us soon after dark. In a twinkling the foresail was gone, and the ship crooning low in the water, scudding swiftly to the westward.

"To-night one of the steerage passengers they called 'the old soldier' died. He had not spoken for a day or two, and this morning the mate informed us that from the rattling in his throat and short breathing he would not probably survive the day. On inquiry it appears that he has been in the service of Napoleon, and has been to America in search of his son, who has long been absent. After long seeking, at last despairing of finding him, the heart that quaked not for the snow and fire of Moscow or the wild huzza of the Cossack, nor at Waterloo, sank under him when this last tie that bound him to life was broken; the old soldier returning desolate and alone to his country — home probably he had none — when death came to his relief.

"The first two weeks pass off quickly at sea; but after this one begins to count the days, and now we have been out twenty-four days, with a head wind for the last nine. Even the hours begin to hang heavily; one becomes tired of everything about the ship; to fix his mind on a book is a thing impossible; reads a page, then throws it down and goes on deck and looks to windward; finds no consolation there, takes a few turns back and forward on the deck, meets the

mate, asks him what's the prospect, thinks we'll have a fine wind in the course of a week; says no more to him, but goes and sits in cabin; waits impatiently for the lunch bell to ring, not because he feels the least sign of an appetite, but wants something to do. After lunch comes the poser, What is to be done with four long hours to dinner? Again goes on deck, and scans every cloud in the heavens; goes below, takes his book; after reading a dozen pages turns back to where he began, having lost the thread of the story by dreaming of what a glorious time he will have when he gets on land, while he was reading. After dinner, probably on champagne days he feels pretty well satisfied with himself and all about him, and cares not which way the wind blows, assured that it blows somebody good; then, as he lies sleepless in his berth, hears the timbers grate the same tune at every roll of the ship, and tramp, tramp of the watch over his head, and the bell every half-hour counting the watches of the night, or falls into a broken sleep and dreams the ship is sinking, and is waked by the ship making a lurch and nearly throwing him from the berth, and hears the pumps going; steward comes in the morning with water, tells him the wind has increased and blows a gale dead ahead, lying to under close-reefed topsails. This is too much; turns over and groans, and tries to get another snooze.

"A land bird flew on board exhausted, and was caught by the mate. None of our company were ornithologists enough to tell us what class he belongs to; he looks much like our own snipe. We are only one thousand miles from land, and the poor thing must have had a weary journey of it. It has blown strong from the east for a week. It is probably a migratory bird seeking some southern clime, and would no doubt have perished in the ocean. The matter of this letter upon firm land may seem trifling, but after one has been long at sea, the slightest token from *terra firma* never fails to touch the most insensible; he stands for hours watching a sail as it slowly rises and skims along.

"We came on soundings yesterday. We had no observation during the last ten days on account of the thick weather, and the uncertainty of our position renders it extremely unsafe running, and last night the wind hauled to the southeast and blew a gale. Fearing we should not be able to weather the Scilly Islands, stood off this morning. As we approach land every one feels that the danger of the voyage is just

here, particularly at this stormy season in the English Channel. Mynheer looks still more long-faced, and takes longer puffs at his pipe, and swears by dunder and blitzen he will hail the first pilot boat he sees, and go ashore on the English coast.

“Our Yankee shows to the best advantage at table. No sooner is he seated than frightful inroads are made on the contents of every dish within reach, which he transfers to his own plate, and as quickly disposes of; then commences calling on the steward for what is at this and that end of the table: nothing escapes his inevitable appetite. After seeing him eat his breakfast, stowing away chicken legs with ham and eggs and sausages, not to mention buckwheat cakes or mush and molasses, filling up the chinks with four and a half cups of coffee, you would say he eats no more to-day; but to see him enjoy his lunch would satisfy your own appetite, and then at dinner we shall certainly be put on an allowance. I hope we shall have a short passage. As he sat one day reading in the round house, the old German says to him, ‘You have von grand appetite for reading.’ Jonathan was a little piqued at what he understood to be a reflection upon his eating propensity; he guessed that he had pretty considerable of a decent sort of an appetite. ‘O, you no understand me; I mean you have one grand desire to read your book always.’

“There is a variety amongst our passengers. We have Yankees, Germans, French, and Swiss. The old German is always grumbling; I never saw his long features drawn up to anything approaching a smile, forever fretting, smoking, and often relating doleful accounts of his travels in America; how he once engaged in a coach which was to carry four passengers, but ‘when we have den place, there be four women extra and three chilens. Mine Got, dis be too bad; I no stand dis. I have mine luggage taken right out, and I go hire von extra.’ When we talk of a short passage he shrugs his shoulders and says, ‘I make no short passages. I was forty-two days in den North Sea; dat be horrible. I was been nineteen day off den West Indies.’ Our little Frenchman is a complete personification of the French character of society; nothing puts him out of humor, — blow high or low, rain or shine, *c’est égal* to him; he smokes his cigar and enjoys his dinner in spite of commotion, and jokes the old German, who sits next him at the table, who all the while looks glum. They sometimes have hot disputes over their wine, their sectional prejudices

clashing often. It is most amusing to observe the contrast between the two characters.

“Land ho! It cleared up this morning, and about two o'clock came in sight of Scilly Isles, and as we have a cracking breeze from the west, with sunshine, which we have not seen for many days, everybody is on deck, looking cheerful and in good spirits, enjoying the fine prospect, anticipating a speedy deliverance from the long confinement. Even the sailors seem to run up the rigging with much greater alacrity than usual. In fact, everything is in the best of humor.

“Thirty-second day at sea. The breeze lasted but twelve hours, when it hauled to the southeast, by which we made Eddystone.

“I think I left off in giving you some idea of the characters of our company on board, — of our Yankee John Bull, who considers himself a British subject because his father lives in England. He despises everything American merely because it is so. If he happens to spy a fine ship, ‘Ah! that is an English ship!’ and maintains his opinions most obstinately. At table he makes frequent attempts to be witty, and laughs at his own jokes, in which he is joined by his wife, who seems just transferred from boarding-school, and lisps French, and works lace, and strings beads, and other necessary accomplishments which, in these wiser times and this age of improvement, are found requisite to constitute a class of beings which were in the olden time called *women* and the better half of creation, but are now distinguished by the cognomen of *ladies*, but to see whom has much the same effect on one's stomach as a heavy sea. They go to make the tour of Europe.

“The old maid is a rare specimen. She has a most queer twist to her mouth, and there is a most exquisite touch about every action. When she is skipping about on deck you will see the sailors casting unutterable glances at each other. She is withal a critic, and has long discussions with the passengers about the merits of certain authors; thinks W. Irving a fine writer, but a pity that one who can write so well should spend his mind on such trifling subjects; thinks the ‘Wife’ a very nice piece.

“Mrs. —, the preacher's wife, poor woman, has a sorry time of it. She has never once made her appearance at table during the voyage. It is indeed melancholy to look upon her pale and worn features, as she occasionally comes up on deck in a fair day (which, by the

way, is not often), about which plays a most attractive sweetness, that excites the sympathy of all for her suffering. She accompanies her husband, who, in laboring to save the souls of other men, forgot that himself had a body of his own to save, and follows the track of the mass of his profession, who annually leave the country to seek in foreign climes the health they have neglected and lost, — the greatest of all blessings.

“The wind increasing to a gale towards morning, were unable to weather the land beyond Eddystone; again stood off. During the night the wind hauled dead ahead, and here we are, within twelve hours’ sail of port, rolling and tumbling about, now on the starboard tack, now on the larboard, gaining nothing, with no prospect of a change. The barometer set fair; the easterly winds here bring fair weather, like our westerly. Mynheer begins to lose patience, and swears by dunder and blitzen he will hail the first pilot-boat and go ashore. If the wind holds in the same quarter for many days longer, we shall probably put in to some harbor on the English coast, and wait for a fair wind.

“On the night of the 32d we encountered the severest gale of all, off Portland lights, from the southeast. What a midnight! When in the height of the storm, it was necessary to wear ship (to get clear of land; the wind was dead on shore). In bringing her round the ropes attached to the rudder gave way, when she struck aback, bearing down her stern and raising the waves above her stern windows, and stove them in, and the water came rushing into the cabin, and ran forward as far as the ladies’ cabin; the door was fortunately closed, or we should probably have had a scene; and then, as the ship rolled, ran aft on the other side. Our berths being amidship, and beyond the ladies’ cabin, escaped the general deluge.

“It is my fate to make hard passages across the Atlantic. We are on the thirty-fourth day from New York, — head winds for the last nineteen, — what we have gained has been by hard beating. We run last night for a few hours with a fair wind; had it continued at that rate we should have been in port this afternoon, instead of which, early this morning, it again changed, and has since blown so, that we only carry just sail enough to steady the ship, making no headway, but drifting towards the English coast.

“Thirty-fifth day. Last night we had again a fair wind, which came

so suddenly and blew so tremendously that it was impossible to run by till ten o'clock this morning, when the wind again began to haul to the eastward. We set sail to make Cape de la Hague, which rises, like the Palisades, in the mist; but this morning found ourselves about six leagues to the eastward of the Cape, from which the wind blew a gale, with rain in torrents. Fortunately we obtained a pilot this morning, — a hardy, broad-shouldered, weather-beaten pilot, with rings in his ears, (who ever saw one without?) who understands the sea-language of all countries. The pilot informs us that the *Island Sun*, which sailed from New York eight days before us, has been in port twenty, and that the easterly winds have prevailed for about a month.

“This is, we hope, the last night we shall have to pass on board ship. Two hours ago we were lying to in the most furious gale we have yet had. Now the sky has cleared and the wind died away to a gentle breeze. The full moon shines out gloriously, and away in the distance under her lies Cape de la Hague, with her glittering lights like stars, towards which we gently turn our course, and by to-morrow anticipate being in the port for which we have made so long and weary a passage.

“*Nous voilà* in Havre! Going on deck this morning, we found ourselves entering the dock at Havre, — passengers dressed in their best suits, shaved, and faces washed clean for the first time since coming on board; the old maid and the wife came out in glowing colors. Nothing appears more ridiculous than this attempt of our countrywomen at show in foreign countries, for here out-of-doors one never sees any finery, but all plainly dressed.

“*November 30.* — We had no sooner hauled up to the wharf than the *gens d'armes* came on board for our passports, and porters from the custom-house for our baggage, which they piled on deck, and conveyed to the custom-house. Meantime we went in search of a hotel, after which we went to the custom-house to unlock our trunks, to be subjected to what most travellers make a great fuss about, but by which I have never been much annoyed. If travellers attempt to pass what the laws of a country prohibit, what can they expect but hindrance? I think you will find that all this noise about custom-house insolence is made by those who attempt to infringe the laws, and to pass what they know is prohibited a free passage.

“We stop at the hotel de N. York on the quai, and enjoy once more the luxury of lying quietly in bed, after being tossed thirty-five days



on the restless billow, and eating our dinner without the fear of being drowned in soup and gravy. We found it necessary to get passports of the American Consul; these we carry to the police, and they give one for the interior of France. The Consul charges two dollars and the police two francs.

“We now took a walk about the walls and ramparts of this ancient city of Havre, the day being very fine and warm. We were surprised at seeing the number of steamboats plying between this and Bourdeaux, Caen, Hamburg, Southampton, Dublin, London, and many other places. They have not the elegant appearance of our boats, but are built much stronger, painted of a dark color, and the machinery is all below. They seem to be constructed by those who consider life and safety of greater importance than speed and elegance, — a perfect contrast to the frail barks to which so many of our countrymen have trusted and lost. Among the vast number of sail from all quarters of the world, there was but one American ship besides our own. This is remarked by the papers as a circumstance that has not occurred since the peace. In the market-place fell in with an old man surrounded with a great quantity of trees; inquired, of course, if he had any mulberry, — had none, and there were none about here.

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“*December 1.* — We took passage, at ten A.M., in the coupé of the diligence for Rouen. The day is warm, the air is soft and moist like May in our country. One is apt to associate the idea of a diligence and slowness together, but nothing is more incorrect. With seven and sometimes nine horses, without sparing the lash, they rumble on with a speed over their paved roads that would soon leave behind the best of our stages, carrying, as they often do, thirty-two passengers, with their baggage piled high on the top of the carriage.”

PARIS.

Frank went out about twelve this morning, and promised to return at five; it is now six, and no Frank has come. What can have become of him? I fear very much he has lost his way; he has no passport with him, can speak no French, may get into difficulty. It is now eight. I have sat in my own room since five, and you may imagine with what feelings I hear every knock at the front door, and say to myself, “There he comes.” Hear steps on the stairs coming nearer and nearer. I think the door will open, but a stranger passes on to the next, humming an

air to himself, happy. I wait; another comes in below, steps slowly up one step after the other — ah! that must be Frank, tired out — now he goes in the room, and . . .

The last you saw of us was watching the little cottage girl going to market, whom we soon lost sight of down a winding hedged lane, the diligence rumbling on with a speed which would leave the best of our stages far in the rear. The road from here to Rouen is one of the finest made roads I ever saw, and kept in the most perfect order by workmen whose business it is to repair the least defect as soon as it appears. The neglect of this is the reason why our stone roads are ruined in so short a time. The road each side is lined with a row of apple-trees. The face of the country is much like Lancaster County, Penn., with every inch highly cultivated. There are no fences, but you see no division except those made by the color of the different species of vegetation, the cattle being attended by the herdsmen. We observed immense fields of turnips for feeding sheep in winter. Wheat appears to be the principal grain that is raised in this region; corn, of course, you never see, a field of corn being only known here as “blé de Turquie,” and very rare and dear. By the way, how is it that the French bread is so much better than ours? Is it in the making or in the wheat itself? I will send you a barrel of French flour, that this problem may be solved.

I am enraptured with these old thatched cottages. Frank says, “How ridiculous to talk about New England cottages, — a square-built house, painted white, stuck on a high hill, with a peaked fence about it, with not a solitary tree to protect it from scorching sunshine! Contrast it with that snug retreat in that copse yonder, with its overhanging roof covered with a complete mat of the greenest moss, and over the door the vine, hedged about with roses, and overshadowed with the old oaks and elms that have stood and will stand for ages. If you ever build a house take a lesson from one of these.” We were surprised to see the quantity of produce and merchandise of all sorts transported on the road on the most clumsy carriages you can imagine, with but two wheels, some eight or ten. The mystery is how one horse can guide such an immense load, — the harness alone seems load enough for one horse, — then before him he has nine or ten *à la tandem*.

We arrived in Rouen about sunset, and the next day, Sunday, concluded to stay and view the old Cathedral and other buildings, for

which the old city is so famous. The Cathedral of Notre Dame is one of the largest and most beautiful in France. The foundation was laid in the year 1100. One of the towers which is upon the rear part of the church was destroyed by lightning in 1822. It has been since restored in cast-iron, and is about five hundred feet in height, said to be the highest monument in the world.

Our fathers built the church of pine boards; the fashion changes, pull them down, — obliterate all marks of the places where our ancestors worshipped, destroying the altars and making others of the constituent materials. There is even fashion about the form of our prayers, which we read kneeling on a cushioned stool. This altar has stood for a thousand years;\* here, upon the same cold marble, the millions of past generations have knelt, and at the same shrine offered up the same solemn mass that many hundred years ago echoed through these high vaulted arches, and still vibrates through the long, dim aisles.

Next follow directions in regard to making beet sugar, hardly intelligible or interesting to us now, but as showing his attention to the subject.

From his accounts we may gather his style of living during this journey. I add a few items which show his temperate expense:—

	Fr	c.	
Dinner at restaurant . . . . .	2	2	= 42 cents.
Café au lait . . . . .	0	13	
Dinner . . . . .	2	00	
Chapeau . . . . .	15	00	= \$3.00.
Dinner . . . . .	3	12	

This is the highest charge I find for dinner, but 250 francs for Cours théorique et pratique de fabrication de sucre idigène, 9 for the opera, often 5 or 8 to the garçon, and liberal artistic payments. He knew how to spend for his genius.

A separate account is headed "Private Expenses." His expenses were paid by the parties engaged in the mulberry speculation.

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\* A slight exaggeration. The church was built in the thirteenth century.

## ROUEN.

One is struck with awe on entering in the night one of these vast buildings, lighted below with a few dim tapers that "make darkness visible"; and the height of the massive pillars that support the lofty arches seem interminable, and the solemn dirge chanted by the choir seems still more unearthly as it floats upward and dies away in the obscurity.

We ascended Mount St. Catherine, from which there is one of the finest views in the world. I recollected going up with John when we were here four years ago. We gained the summit just as the sun was setting, and sat down among the ruined towers and fortifications that were made by the Roman army under Julius Cæsar. 'T was summer time, and all nature was clothed in the richest green. Below the Seine wound along, spotted with its numberless little islands, and before us that wide valley bounded by those gently undulating hills that confine that beautiful river. At the right lay the ancient city of Rouen, its lofty trees and spires seeming to rise even higher than the mountain itself. Over all the setting sun poured a flood of golden light. After visiting the fountain erected over the place where Joan d'Arc was burned, and the gallery of paintings, we took passage in the evening for Paris, as we could find no diligence that left in the morning,—a circumstance which we did not afterwards regret, for it was a glorious moonshine, the air was soft and balmy, and we never felt more like enjoying ourselves. Arrived in Paris early next morning, left Frank at the diligence office while I went in search of lodgings. Went first to Mad. Bell's, near the Boulevard, where John and I had stopped before, but could get no room there. She recommended me to a hotel in Rue Monsigny, No. 5, about the same distance from the Boulevard, and a place we like very much. The weather has been fine since we arrived here, with very little rain, which is uncommon at this season.

PARIS, Dec. 22.

WARD AND RUSH, —In your last letter you directed us to procure mulberry-trees to an indefinite amount, provided they could be obtained at a cheap rate. We went immediately to Versailles, and found a very fine lot that Mons. Remont had reserved for his own planting the coming season, — some of them were seven feet in height, and very ripe; to get them we were obliged to take some 15,000 of

the moretti, which here are considered superior to the multicaulis, of which there were 30,000 ; these, with the 15,000 multicaulis, we had already engaged, and a few of the moretti he was to let us have, and delivered in Paris, for the sum of 31,000 francs (the number of trees in all amounting to 65,000), were all well packed, and a part of them on the road to Paris, when Mons. Remont discovered that we had (by my bad French) misunderstood each other in regard to money affairs, he supposing we had the whole amount deposited at Wells, when we had only 9,000 francs, or that Wells would guarantee the payment of the debt. Upon this he refused to deliver the trees, of course, except what had already arrived in Paris, for which I gave him a draft for 8,000 francs, and he has trusted me for 2,000 francs for forty days, as I have promised him we shall have funds before that time ; he only wanted the guarantee of Wells for six months even. I am sorry you have not put us in the way of obtaining funds on credit, for in a strange country you cannot suppose we can succeed without them. Remont has promised to reserve the trees for us a short time, but as they are rising in value on account of the demand for them in our country, cannot depend on him long. If you have sent funds by the Liverpool, from which we expect news to-morrow or next day, the trees are yours. Those we have started are on the road to Havre, and will go in the Louis Philippe packet of the 1st of January. I am very sorry they could not have all gone together ; they may still.

Tear off this and send to Burlington.

SEP.

MR. JOHN CHENEY, Philadelphia.

As I have told you before, we had purchased in December 45,000 *Morus multicaulis* of M. Remont of Versailles, but on account of some misunderstanding in regard to the payment, he refused to deliver them all at that time ; 15,000, however, with 4,000 moretti, were delivered, for which I gave him drafts on Wells & Co., payable on the 30th of January, being *morally certain* (from what Rush had written advising us to buy trees, and you would send the money) of receiving funds before that time. If we do not (which I very much fear now, from what I wrote by the Royal William, that the prospect of getting trees here was not promising), we shall soon be short, and must commence to live on six sous a day, as the soldiers do.

Those 15,000 and 4,000 have gone by the Louis Philippe packet

of the 1st of January, but she did not sail till the 16th. They were consigned to Gracie & Sergeant, where we purchased the bill in New York. Perhaps I have not done right in directing them so, but when they arrive you will of course go to New York and attend to them. There are nine boxes and one bale partly wrapped in wicker work, marked S. W. 10 C. R. C. 9.

M. Remont has still in reserve for us the rest of the trees, and called on us yesterday and said that he was ready to pack and (ship) them to Havre immediately, besides offering 20,000 more small ones. From some cause he all at once has confidence in us; he is now packing, and will have them ready by the 1st of February, but to pay the freight to Havre will take the last sous we have. We wait *most impatiently* for means to fulfil our engagements, and if none come within ten days shall be in ——. We shall want about \$6,000. We can probably find some more trees before spring, but shall not engage any more till we hear from you.

Paine has bought and sent home a good many trees; his agent has been all over France. *Dr. Knox* has been here all winter.

MESSRS. WARD CHENEY & BROS.,  
Burlington, N. J., 1839.

PARIS, Jan. 24, 1839.

We are attending a course of lectures on the theory and practice of the fabrication of sugar from the beet, given by M. Gautier, inventor of a new method of extracting the sugar, or rather the juice of the beet, *without pressure*. This is the third course he has given. They come from all quarters here to get instruction; at present there are some thirty or forty attending, from Belgium, Russia, Cuba, the United States, etc. His plan is being adopted everywhere on account of the simplicity of the process and the increased product, besides a great reduction in the expense of machinery and labor. We are allowed admission every day for one month to the manufactory, and may see every part of the process in every particular. When we are a little further advanced shall give you an account of it. We shall learn more here than we could by visiting every establishment of the kind in France, because here we gain a practical knowledge. We shall send some of the best beet seed, of the most approved variety. Frank says he shall plant twenty acres next season. The apparatus can be

sent from here probably at a cheaper rate than it could be made at home.

M. Remont tells me that my best plan to learn the art of raising silkworms will be to go to the Bergeries de Le-Mans next summer, as there is a model established there for the instruction of all. It is about seven leagues from Paris. There are several other places near, one at Nantz, and another at Villenoble, where large cocooneries are erected, which I shall see in the feeding season. We went yesterday to see M. Clair in the new Cocoonery; he has models of the most approved laboratories, with apparatus for ventilation and heating the air, and a machine for drying the damp leaves, and a plan of using the net, but not so simple as you have it.

Great preparations are making in the Champs Elysées for the approaching Exposition. Five hundred laborers are engaged in erecting immense buildings for the reception of the innumerable articles which are offered for exhibition, which it is said will surpass all others.

We have ascertained here that silkworms' eggs have been preserved in ice-houses for twenty-two months, and that they hatched as well as new, by being hatched in a moist air. A too dry air was probably the cause of failure at Burlington, last year.

We received a letter from John a few days since, but from Burlington not a whisper. Since we got John's letter we are still more anxious to secure the trees, as he says they are selling very high there. These trees at that rate will bring you six or seven hundred per cent of the first cost.

Don't fail to write by every *steamship* and packet, and send us the "Silk-Grower" regularly. Frank wants a copy to leave at Galignani's reading-room.

LONDON, Apr. 13, 1839.

DEAR BROTHERS, — I received yours of the 15th of March last night; brings good news, and I need not say how much pleasure it gives me to hear from home, now that I am alone here, and have no one to talk to. I have neglected writing too much lately, and now, since Frank is gone, I have nothing to write about. James Jackson will say, "Why don't you give us something for the 'Silk-Grower'?" but what can I find in this great city of London? So you must be content for the present; perhaps I may gather something when I go back to France, which I shall do in May, after I get your letters by the

Great Western. The wind has blown from the east for the last two weeks, and I think the Richard Anderson *may* have a short passage. I hope so, on Frank's account, but I very much fear he will not have reached home before you get this, and that he will regret having taken passage in her. How I have bothered Frank in keeping him back so long! 'T was that unfortunate letter I wrote to Havre that marred all, or you would have seen him long ago. I cannot think of the business of last winter without being amazed at my own foolishness in the management of the affair; the only excuse I can offer is my ignorance of business transactions. What surprises me now is, how that Remont should have trusted us to so great an amount, being strangers to him and every one here; it might have been our long, honest faces, for at one time they had a peculiar elongated solemn expression—but enough of this. Frank will give you the particulars. I hope you will see him before you get this. I think it was well for Frank to go, as he did not enjoy being away from his business, when he thought of how much there was to do; so it was better for him to go, even if he returned again in the fall. By the way, Rush, have you still the intention of coming out this year? If so, let me know, because it may have some influence on my moves here, so do not fail to let me know by return of Liverpool; but in regard to *coming out*, act freely, and don't think of *me*. I shall endeavor to discover all I can in relation to the cultivation of silk during the summer, but you must not be disappointed if not so much is to be found out as was anticipated. I fear that my "European correspondence" will not amount to much; however, I shall do all I can.

By your letters I think your prospects are fine for next season; let me know how things go often. I wrote you by the Quebec, and sent some "Rohan" potatoes.\*

There is no beginning or end to this letter, I write in such a hurry; never mind, *go ahead!* To save postage I have written to John on the other side.

SEP.

LONDON, Apr. 17.

DEAR JOHN, — Vous êtes bon garçon to write so often; in every letter vous avez dit quelque chose j'en suis chariné — poure moi, je suis logé à No. 2 Grafton St., Fitzroy Square, tout près de Healy & Harvey.

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\* The potatoes proved an unfortunate speculation.



I have not seen much of London yet, but I am très content with what I have seen. What *nice* things there are in the National Gallery, nothing poor! The Exhibition will open in about two weeks. I anticipate a good deal of pleasure from that. I see Healy almost every day; he is getting on finely, painting *big* folks; has improved surprisingly, colors like Vandyke. I dined with Harvey yesterday; we shall go to Paris together, in May. He is going to be my cicerone here, and I his in Paris. Healy has promised to go with me to see Betsey and Mary Ann \* soon; they do not live at the old place now. I am sorry I could not have done something better with your funds, but it was so late, you know.

I bought in Paris some casts for you. They were collected in a hurry, and I fear you may not like the selection; when I go back I will pay more attention to those things. I am gathering prints every day. I have never seen an engraving of the Lady Jane Grey, † I doubt if there has been one made yet. Some time ago there was a good deal said about the new art of making pictures by the camera obscura, but I have never seen any of the effects produced by it, and lately have heard nothing of it.

MESSRS. WARD CHENEY & BROS.,

Burlington, N. J., U. S. A.

New York Ship, May 24.

LONDON, May 17, 1839.

DEAR BROTHERS, — Your letters of the 24th and 31st of March, and by the Great Western, are received, and give me much pleasure, though I have some fears, from the tone of your last letter, that the tree business will prove rather a poor speculation; but, situated as we were, it was the best we could have done in the matter. Frank has told you before this, probably, the particulars to your satisfaction. When I think of the affair now coolly, — that the mistake was on our part, and that you have had wrong done you; but as we could do nothing but *grumble then*, we took the liberty to indulge ourselves in that luxury. But let it pass; it is done and cannot be undone. You will think it strange that I am still in London, but I have told you the reason, and now that I shall have nothing to attend to here, I shall return to France in a few days, and gather what there is to be learned in regard to the

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\* Daughters of his landlady.

† By De la Roche.

object for which I came out. I will say again, don't expect anything wonderful. I shall attend particularly to what you say in relation to the eggs, and can no doubt procure any quantity. I send the bill for one thousand dollars by the Great Western; don't bother yourselves about sending any more at present.

Frank, you must give me a detailed account of your voyage home. I fear very much you had a long passage, and on the *cold water* system you must have had rather a *dry* time of it; for a few days after you left I felt rather *blue*, but I soon made some pleasant acquaintances through Healy. In one family in particular I have passed many a pleasant evening; they are Americans, and live out beyond the Regent's Park; they have spent some time in France, and have nothing of the reserve that the Americans generally have, so that I feel as much at home there as with you. I had like to have forgotten to say, qu'il-y-a trois sœurs dans ce famille-là (!!!).

I shall go to France in a few days; shall go down to Kent to join my friend Harvey, and we shall go over together to Paris. I am sorry I am not there now to see the revolutionary sport. I suppose it will be all over before I get there.

My health is excellent now. I think this climate suits me even better than France. I think, after I get through feeding silkworms, I may return here.

John, I have received your kind letter by the Great Western, with *the accompaniment*. I wish I could say something in return, but this thick skull of mine encloses so fast what few ideas it holds that no beating can induce them to leave their stronghold. I can only say, que je suis charmé de sa lettre et ravi with the writer.

The Exhibition is open, and said to be better than common. I am disappointed, much disappointed in Wilkie. There is nothing of the *blind fiddler* left in him. Turner is most extravagant, and leaves his things rude and unfinished. I am pleased with Leslie. There is an admirable picture from Don Quixote by him. Healy has five portraits in the Exhibition, which do him credit; he is going to France soon to paint the King. I see Healy often, and through him have made some pleasant acquaintance here. We took tea with Betsey and Mary Ann, and afterwards went to the theatre with them. They made inquiries about you, and want to see you very much.

I dined at the Artists' Benevolent Fund last week, at the Freemasons'

Hall; the Duke of Cambridge presided. We had speeches from Lords and great folks. Sergeant Talfourd is a splendid speaker; we had singers from St. Paul's, two boys, — that sang enchantingly, after dinner, the "Non nobis." I never heard anything surpass that, — "strains that might create a soul under the ribs of death;" then "God save the Queen," and many other enchanting things were sung during the evening. The gallery was filled with fair forms and faces, and on drinking their healths, we made the old hall resound with shouts. I *never felt more glorious in my life.*

PARIS, June 24, 1839.

DEAR BROTHERS, — I wrote you by the Liverpool. Since I wrote I have not heard from you, but expect news by the Great Western in a few days. I have been to Villenoble to see the silk establishment of M. Gremodst. They are feeding about twenty thousand there of the white worm, much like what you have fed last season; they use the leaves of the white and morettis mulberry. They have many mulberries planted, but they are still very small. All the objection that is made to them is that they are not hardy, and will not endure the frosts of their winter. The leaves are considered preferable to all others. The plan of feeding is better described in the books that Frank carried home than I can give it. I shall go out soon to see the reeling process.

I wish James was here to give you a description of the Exposition de l'Industrie in the Champs Elysées; I cannot do it. I went down yesterday to make drawings of some silk reels there, but found them so complicated that I thought they would be useless to you. There are several models of machines for manufacturing sugar from the beet, one for pressing the pulp by a cylinder press; the rolls were hollow, and the surface perforated with small holes about the size of a quill, and around them a wove wire gauze is laid; the pulp is forced up between the rollers by a sort of force pump, the juice running off at the ends of the hollow cylinder. I very much doubt whether this plan will work.

JULY 7, 1839.

. . . I wrote you by my last it was fortunate I had not paid Remont for all the trees he pretended to have sent. I paid him 2,500 francs on arriving in Paris. There is yet some 9,000 or 10,000 francs due. It is very doubtful whether he gets much more. I have not

seen him for some weeks. I went yesterday to Villenoble to purchase some eggs for you, but could get none. I don't know that it is of much consequence to get the sort they have here ; they are the same you got at Frankfort last year, — the white peanut worm, — but not near as large and fine ; their multicaulis were about one foot high. I shall be obliged to go South to get eggs. There will be a good many trees in this region next fall, but very small ones. I will see what there is South. We had such poor luck on the last winter's operations that I have not courage to attempt anything again in the way of purchases.

There are three American artists lodging at the same house with me, who are going next week to the South of France and Italy ; possibly I may join them. If I do, I shall not probably see any letter from you for two months or so. In case I should not return soon to Paris, I will have the funds so arranged that Rush or Frank, if either should come out, may take advantage of them ; this would be necessary, for they are, you know, deposited in my name.

MONDAY, 8.

I have about made up my mind to go to the South of France, and perhaps to Italy. If I go, I shall start next week with the three artists.

John, I always get something from you by every letter. Je vous remercie bien, je suis toujours content de vos nouvelles ; à présent je suis logé chez Mad. Pirau et Mons. Harvey et trois autres American artistes de New York, Messrs. Van Bright, Gray, and Huntington. They go to Italy next week. It is a strong temptation to me to accompany them. Have you seen the engraving of De la Roche's "Gabriel" ? I think it is one of the most exquisite things in the world. By the way, it is an almost exact portrait of his wife, who is the daughter of Horace Vernet ; she has the most angelic expression of any woman I ever saw, but she is not long for this world. The Lady Jane Grey of De la Roche has been lost, — burnt. Quel malheur, O quel malheur !

MESSRS. WARD CHENEY & BROS.,

Burlington, N. J., U. S. A.

Per British Queen.

PARIS, July 28, 1839.

DEAR BROTHERS, — I wrote you by the Great Western, saying that I intended soon going to Italy in company with some American artists ; but since then I have given it up, and shall try to do all in

my power to secure some trees for you. I went yesterday to Villenoble, but they have nothing there worth having; not a tree over a foot in height. I saw Remont a week ago; he has some, but rather small. His price there was forty francs per hundred for the best; says he has some fine trees about sixty leagues from Paris. I think it is rather doubtful whether I shall be able to find good ripe trees here; the season has been rather backward and cold. The advantage of getting trees here is great on account of the facility of sending them to Havre, to be shipped by the packets. However, if nothing can be done here, I shall immediately start south towards the Mediterranean, and see what can be done there. I think it very doubtful whether many trees can be found, on account of the large shipments of last year. The product of this year has been from *cuttings principally*. I should say that three-fourths of the cuttings planted at Villenoble had failed; the cuttings being taken from branches, and small.

I am glad to hear that your prospects are so good for the next season. You will no doubt make a good deal. It is surprising how the speculation keeps up. . . When will it end?

Frank, why do you not write? I suppose you are enchanting the Burlington folks with your *cornet à piston*.

Dear John, I am glad to hear you are going home with Electa to see mother; how lonely she must be! I do hope before a long time some of us will be there to stop, after the mulberry speculations are over; everything must give way to that now. Dubourjal is well. Healy arrived yesterday to paint the *King*. I will collect some more casts and something more pleasing, and send you, with some pictures that I have collected.

Health is excellent; I can stand anything now.

MESSRS. WARD CHENEY & BROS.,  
Burlington, N. J., U. S. A.

PARIS, Aug. 7, 1839.

TO WARD CHENEY, Burlington, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER,—I wrote you in a great hurry by the Liverpool steamer, after receiving your letter by her. The day after I saw Remont, and made the following bargain for trees. Perhaps I have done wrong, but as the price of trees was rising every day, and as news from America was received of the sales there, and Prince had sent out two agents to purchase trees, and knowing there must be a

limited number of them to be had, I got rather nervous and struck. I could have done nothing with any one else but Remont without ready money ; besides, it would have been impossible, I think, to have found so great a number in one place, and to gather a few here and there would be attended with expense and uncertainty ; so, taking all into consideration, I have done what I have done.

Then follows a copy of the contract in French. This contract was not well carried out, and caused Seth much anxiety and embarrassment, as funds were delayed.

Next follows a sketch of a reel for silk, with a description of it, which he thought an improvement on the one in use in America.

“FRANK, — I am going to-morrow to Geneva, and from thence I propose returning by way of Lyons in company with some American artists ; perhaps we may go on as far as the North of Italy before I return, but I think not, for I must be back to Paris before the 1st of November to attend to the trees, which I shall see counted and measured, and not trust to others, as last year.

“John, Philip arrived a few days since from Italy, and goes home by the 8th. He has done some famous things, and will do more ; he seems more ambitious than ever.”

GENEVA, Aug. 15, 1839.

I left Paris the 7th, in the coupé of the diligence, for this celebrated place, passing through Troyes, Dijon, etc. The route from Paris to the foot of the Jura is most dull and uninteresting, passing through a level country, but highly cultivated. I was surprised to see large fields of Indian corn as we approached the Alps. Nothing was wanting but a few stumps to make one imagine he was travelling in Ohio. The weather has been very dry for a long time, and we were enveloped in clouds of dust as we rolled along over a fine stone road. We dined on the third day at Pierre, from which place we began to discover the Alps far away in the distance, like a faint blue cloud ; as we approached them their forms gradually appeared more distinct and definite ; the air was very clear, I think more so than I ever saw it in America. My *compagnon de voyage* observed, “Is that a cloud we see there above the long line of Jura Alps, or can that be Mont Blanc ?”

Yes, *it is* Mont Blanc!!! We were at least one hundred and fifty miles from that mountain, away in the plain below the Jura Alps, which are themselves higher than any mountains I have ever seen; still Mont Blanc towered above them all, a pyramid of light. I never saw anything before that gave me such an idea of height. We arrived at the foot of the Alps before the sun set, and left the diligence, with its tired horses, behind, and walked on to enjoy the scene before us. Long herds of cows were winding their way down the mountain, followed by bouncing Swiss girls, with broad-brimmed hats; but we heard not the song of the "Ranz des Vaches"; so we hurried on, and reached the height before the sun had set, and looked down on the vast plain we had passed below. We regretted that we were obliged to pass this line of mountains in the night, by the dim starlight. We were tantalized by faint glimpses of the shadowy forms of mountains, and scenes that by daylight must be glorious; the sun rose just as we came to the descent of the last Alp in the Jura range, when the glorious sight of the main line of mountains and glaciers, and, crowning all, Mont Blanc, burst at once on our view. This was too much; it was absolutely *crushing*, painfully sublime. I wish I could convey to you some faint idea of what I saw and felt then, but I have not the command of language, and must be silent. We arrived in Geneva after a journey of three days and three nights from Paris. I am very much pleased with this place and the people; they seem to be much like the Philadelphians, — a quiet, contented race. Then there is Lake Geneva; nothing can be more delicious than this. I can scarcely believe that I am awake, and that all this delightful scene is a reality. As soon as the dawn appears I rush to my window that looks on the lake and mountains beyond, and try to persuade myself that I am not dreaming, but that it is the same sun I have seen rise three thousand miles off from my low native hills, which I now see reflected from the tops of those vast pyramids of ice and snow; no, it is not a dream, but I have passed from some other state of existence to Elysium. A strange, melancholy feeling comes over me when I think of leaving this delicious spot, which almost makes me wish I had never come here. I feel, too, that I am undeserving all this good fortune and happiness. John, you have read Rousseau's description of this place. How exquisite it is! he must have felt how far short of the reality he came. You must come here some day and read Rousseau again; it is

worth crossing the Atlantic for. I am going to-morrow to Chillon, at the other end of the lake, in company with Huntington and Gray. I shall wait here till the 23d for your letters by the steamship. Perhaps you may hear from me next in Italy; at all events, I shall return to Paris by the middle of October.

PARIS, Dec. 15.

We have just returned from Versailles for the fifth time, and have closed a bargain with Mons. Remont for the following lots of trees, which includes what we have purchased before that I gave you notice of:—

45,000	Morus multicaulis	from 3 to 6 feet in height.
17,000	“	moretti.
1,000	“	elata.
1,000	“	dandsls.
	100	fruit-trees of various species.

The whole purchase amounts to 31,000 francs, the best that can be done in France. We could not obtain the multicaulis without taking the other varieties. They will probably be sent by the packet of the 1st or 8th of January.

You must send the funds as soon as possible. We may be able to gather a few more in the course of the winter. You understand, *thirty-one thousand francs.*

As the mail goes immediately, have not time to say another word.

SEP.

MILAN, Aug. 29, 1839.

FLORENCE, Sept. 20.

DEAR BROTHERS,—I wrote you last week from Geneva by the steamship. The day after we made an excursion on board of the steamboat to the end of Lake Lemman. The morning was calm, and the water as smooth as glass; in the air a mistiness like October in America, through which the dim forms of the lofty Alps that confine the lake appeared one after the other, as we ascended the lake, like a magical scene. The boat stops occasionally at Vyon, Vevay, etc., to take in and land passengers,—queer, old antique-looking villages, with round towers and Gothic spires, the hills crowned with vineyards to their tops. Anon the famous old Castle of Chillon appeared in the distance on the shore of the lake. Nothing can be more magnificent than the scenery at this end of the lake, bounded by high mountains,



some with their tops covered by eternal snows. We landed at Villeneuve, at the end of the lake, and wandered along the shore of the lake; now stopping to sketch, and now to admire the magnificent scene around us, of lake and mountains and glaciers. Soon we came to the old Castle of Chillon, which we entered and explored; descended into the prison cut in the rocks, and dimly lighted up by narrow crevices in the thick walls. Here is where Byron lays the scene of "The Prisoner of Chillon."

And then we came to Montreux, a village situated on the side of the mountains, and higher up still the pointed spire of the village church rises, founded on a craggy rock half hidden with vines and fig-trees, and below a torrent rushes along down to the lake. From here we command one of the most glorious views in the world down the lake towards Geneva. While we were admiring this splendid scene, one of those lovely Swiss girls passed along.

"A basket on her head she bore, her brow was smooth and fair."

She wore the peculiar costume of the Canton de Vaud; on her arm was hung the curious, comical straw hat worn by the paysans, and beautiful and picturesque it is too; and so she wended her way up the mountain path that led to her mountain home, and we lost sight of her forever.

After spending a few most delightful days here, we left with regret this lovely spot, and returned to Geneva, and took passage early in the morning for Milan, taking the road along the northern side of the lake. The sunrise is glorious on this lake; nothing in nature can be more magnificent than the scene. Here at our feet lies this glassy lake, reflecting clearly all the nearer objects in the middle ground, a most lovely cultivated country with vineyards and cornfields, and here and there a clustering village distinctly marked by a round tower or spire; then beyond rises the "Mole," a great pyramid, as it seems, in the misty morning light; and high above all towers Mont Blanc, the glaciers stretching away interminably in the distance, reflecting from their icy tops the sun, producing the effect of rivers of molten silver running down the sides of the mountain.

We again passed the lovely village of Montreux, and took our leave of it with much the same feeling with which one leaves his old home forever, the setting sun casting a rich, warm glow on the thousand

vineyards spread out like a rich carpet, and rising terrace above terrace, every rock covered with the mantling vine.

As the sun set we bade good-by to Lake Lemán, and, passing along the banks of the Rhone, arrived at St. Maurice just as the full moon rose above the high and craggy rock that overhangs, and that must some day fall and crush these towns. We left early next morning, following the Rhone and its narrowing valley, and slept at Brigue the second night, at the foot of the Simplon, which we began to ascend next morning by that splendid road made by Napoleon. The ascent is very easy, so much so that in descending it is not necessary to drag the wheels of heavily loaded carriages. It is the most wonderful work of mechanic *art* that I have ever seen. My admiration is divided, in passing it, between this and the mighty and seemingly impassable Alps over which it passes. We reached the top of the mountain about noon, and then began to descend towards Italy through the narrow pass only wide enough for the rushing torrent and the road. On each side rise the "cloud-capped" Alps, covered with eternal snows. Here the sun rises and sets at midday. No words or colors can convey the least idea of their fearful height; they must be seen. It is painful even to look upon them.

Anon the air begins to soften as we descend, and soon the delicious vale of Domo d'Ossola bursts at once on our view, all covered with vineyards and cornfields and groves of mulberry. Nothing can be more striking and agreeable than this sudden contrast from barren mountains to the most lovely valley in the world. And now we pass along the banks of that beautiful Lake Maggiore, with its enchanting little islands crowned with palaces. Leaving these we come out on the broad, rich plains of Lombardy, like a vast prairie cultivated with great care, each side of the road hedged, and the fields planted with the most luxuriant mulberry, seemingly enough to produce silk for the whole world.

We stopped at Milan two days. The Cathedral, which is the great object of attraction here, is certainly the most beautiful and imposing piece of architecture I have ever seen. It is built of marble, and in the Gothic style. More than four thousand pieces of sculpture enrich this church; this may give you an idea of its richness and magnificence. From its lofty spire we had a fine view of the distant Alps which we have passed, and of the plains of Lombardy.

We were detained ten days at Parma on account of the sickness of

one of our companions (Gray), and here I had a fine opportunity of studying the works of Correggio, as some of his best pictures are here. I stood two hours fixed like a statue before that beautiful picture of St. Jerome (so called), of which you have seen engravings ; but little of its surpassing beauty can be copied in an engraving. It is the most sweetly colored picture I have ever seen, and the most gracefully composed. In the Cathedral are some of his famous frescos. No one but Correggio has painted angels so lovely in form and heavenly in expression. How unfortunate it is that they have been painted on such decaying materials ! Time has been hard on them, and will soon obliterate all traces of their wonderful beauty. I gazed long and silently, and turned to go away, when I looked down, and before the altar saw one that knelt with her eyes fixed on the image of the Virgin above her, unconscious of all around. I thought at first it was a mere delusion of the vision, from looking so long on the exquisitely painted forms in the dome above, and that the beautiful image was still left on my sight, until it moved, and, as she passed along, dipped her finger in the holy water, crossing herself, and at the same time touching the finger of her little sister that she led by her side, who imitated the same motion innocently as a child imitates, looking up to her that led her instead of to the cold marble image above. And now I saw where Correggio found his models. They walked the earth ever, and do so still. He went not to heaven to bring an angel down ; he raised them from the earth.

In coming from Milan we stopped an hour at Placentia, a place celebrated for its beautiful women, and it well deserves its reputation. I think I saw during the short stop I made there more beautiful women than in all my life before. Their features are classically moulded ; their eyes are dark, with long lashes darker still ; their mouths inclining rather too much to the voluptuous perhaps, a remarkable fulness about the chin and neck, their busts the most perfect imaginable ; their step is firm, but at the same time graceful and easy ; and what is better still than all is that they seem so unconscious of their charms, and move on with the same ease whether observed or not ; 't is all the same.

FLORENCE, Oct. 15, 1839.

DEAR BROTHERS,— I have received yours by the Great Western. It was what I expected, and it is for this that I have waited here so

long, and if I had been in Paris at the time I received your letter I should have followed your advice, and should have shaken hands with you before you will have received this ; but as it is, I am tempted to run the risk of passing the winter here rather than cross the stormy Atlantic at this season, and arrive in our cold climate in the winter. I think there will be no danger in following this course. I shall write to Remont what you advised, telling him at the same time that in any further communication he may wish to have relative to the affair he may direct to the other side of the Atlantic, which will lead him to believe I have returned home, so that I shall not be troubled by him ; in fact, I have very little fear of him, or pity, for you know how he attempted to deceive us in the last year's purchase in regard to the number of trees. If you shall not think it safe to stop here long, I hope you will tell me what will be my best course, considering the circumstances of the case. I am sorry I was so precipitate in making the contract ; I was anxious to do all I could, and overshot the mark. I hope you will be more fortunate in your summer's operations ; but from what you write, I fear your chance is small. It will be indeed unfortunate if, after so many years of exertion, you should not be able to produce something for your own benefit ; but we must console ourselves that the mere accumulation of fortune is not the greatest blessing, and that the poor man is often happier than the prince (!). I flatter myself to be able, when I return to America, to depend more upon my own exertions than heretofore, and this is one great inducement for me to study here my favorite art, where there are so many advantages.

FLORENCE, Oct. 17, 1839.

I have been now in this delightful city a month ; it is really the most pleasing city I have seen in all my travels. The air is soft and healing in this valley of the Arno. I have not been in such good health and spirits since I can remember, and am able to accomplish more without injury to my health than I ever could before, and this is one of the best places, except Rome, to study the fine arts in the world. There are two of the finest galleries in Europe. We can get models and the best very cheap. There are *five of us Americans*. Terry, you know, Frank, who crossed the water with us, is one of our club ; and a fine fellow he is, too, and Dan and I are brothers. We work together, walk together, eat together, room together ; in the morning we all five

draw at Terry's room, from a beautiful female model. After this Dan (Huntington) and I return to our room, and paint from a beautiful girl who sits for her head only; she has a most sweet and Madonna-like expression, and a face that, if I should see in America, should be apt to fall in love with. Dan has made a most beautiful picture of her looking down. I wish you had it, John, to engrave; it would make a very pleasing plate for an annual. To-day we have begun another in a position looking up, which makes a fine contrast to the other. I hope to make a picture, too, of my own. It is very agreeable to study so with another, and one learns a great deal more in the same time. I think, by working a year or so in this way, I shall be able to do something if my health permits, and when I return the first I shall do will be to paint the portraits of all the family. I hope to be able to do them justice; but I am flattering myself, 't is time to stop.

The expenses of living here are not so great as in Paris. My coffee and bread in the morning costs but half a paul, and dinner not over three pauls;\* rooms are also cheaper than in Paris. Our models, too, will sit all day for four or five pauls, and when there are so many of us together, the expense is comparatively nothing.

After remaining here about a month longer we all go to Rome together, and shall have the opportunity of studying those famous works of Raphael and Michael Angelo. Time flies now, occupied as I am in my favorite pursuit, and the blue devils never cross my path. I wish I could tell you of the glorious time I have had for the last two months, and describe all that I have seen, but it is impossible, and I must wait till I see you, and we will sit down and talk it over in our old home, when we all meet together there again. How much pleasure there is in the anticipation of meeting one's friends after long separation! It is the height of enjoyment, of which he who has never parted from those he loves can have no conception.

MESSRS. WARD CHENEY & BROS., Burlington, N. J.

FLORENCE, Dec. 1, 1839.

DEAR BROTHERS, — This letter must be a short one, for the best of reasons, — have the poorest of subjects to write about, myself. Since I have been here I have spent all my time in drawing and painting, so have

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\* An old Italian coin, worth sixpence English, or twelve cents.

had no time to see curiosities, except those of art-galleries, and these are enough to satisfy an artist, so that he is apt to neglect all other subjects. I might give you a description of these famous works, but it would be tame and flat, and I have not the faculty of expressing myself in words, so must pass over them in silence, but hope that I shall one day be able, by my pencil, to give you some idea of them. As for seeing palaces and wandering through long fatiguing suites of apartments, this is time lost; when you have seen one you have seen all. By the way, I was invited to the Pitti Palace the other night to a grand entertainment and ball, given by the Grand Duke of Tuscany, but did not go, — did not think it worth the price of a new suit.

I have been to walk to-day (Sunday) in the beautiful gardens of the palace, altogether more pleasing, I think, than Versailles; the air is soft and delicious to-day as May, and what makes it still more delightful is that it has been for the last two or three weeks rather cold and rainy, and the wind from the mountains, which have been covered with snow, has felt to me quite wintry; in fact, it is said November is the most unpleasant month they have here. I hope this fine weather will last at least one week, for to-morrow we all start for Rome, the "eternal city." Five artists and one doctor from South Carolina, my two companions from New York, Terry who crossed the Atlantic with me, and one from Philadelphia make out the number, so that we take the whole voiture. A slow way of travelling they have here. We shall be six days at least going to Rome, which is not more than one hundred and fifty miles. I anticipate, however, an agreeable and interesting time, as we shall pass through the most interesting country in the world to us, of which we hear and read so much. At Rome I shall continue my studies in the fine arts, it being the emporium of art. I hope to make some improvement in the course of the winter.

Dear John, Powers is engaged in modelling a statue, which he calls "Eve contemplating the Apple." Greenough I have not seen. I hear his "Washington" is nearly finished. We have tried to get some casts from the Venus, by applying to the Director of the Gallery, but cannot obtain them. There is a mighty difference between them and those you see in America. We intended to get copies of the beautiful bas-reliefs on the door of the Baptistery, which Michael Angelo said were fit for the gates of Paradise. They are indeed the most exquisite things I have ever seen, and some casts of them I should consider

invaluable, but we cannot obtain them. I shall send home a beautiful female Torso, the original of which is at Naples, with some others, Wednesday morning. Start in an hour for Rome.

ROME, Feb. 2, 1840.

How time flies, seemingly faster here than in any other place I have ever been in.

DEAR BROTHERS, — If I had not been so occupied with art, I should have been quite miserable for the last four months, for I think it is nearly that time since I have heard from you, till I received yours by the Liverpool a few days ago, which I opened with trembling hands, fearing it might contain some evil news, but am happy to hear that you are all in health at least, which is one of the greatest blessings after all, and without it, though one may be independent of circumstances, he is still unhappy, but let Fortune rob one of all but that and honesty, and he may laugh at her.

I had got so far in my sermon when I heard a chanting of solemn music in the street, and on going to my window, saw a long procession of Capuchin monks, each with a candle in his hand (this is Candlemas day), moving slowly up the square and entering the convent opposite; there was one in the rear dressed in rich robes, with a long white beard and fine head, his voice deep and full. If the day had been pleasant I should have gone to St. Peter's, where there is a great ceremony of blessing the candles by the Pope. St. Peter's is about two miles from here, on the other side of the Tiber, so that I do not often go there except on the days the Vatican is open; besides, the chambers are very damp and cold in the winter, and not safe for one of weak lungs to spend much time in. I have yet seen but few of the many rich churches there are here: in fact, one here in Rome feels himself lost in a wilderness of art; go where he will he is surrounded with the accumulated riches of ages; years might be spent here and one-half left unseen. The wonderfully beautiful works of Raphael, whom they call "divine," — and well he deserves the appellation, — were enough for the study of a lifetime, though one may at first be repulsed by the dry and hard manner in which some of his most beautiful works are done, yet the inimitable simplicity of the design will in the end carry him irresistible sway. How I should like to stop here a *few years*, and study them; if I were independent, think I

should, but the recollection of them, I am persuaded, will have an influence upon whatever I may do hereafter; the impression can never be effaced which they make.

I am still continually occupied in drawing and painting and modelling, and find I can do more without injury to my health than I have ever been able to before, *though I tax nature to the utmost*. I believe it must be that the climate has a great effect upon me. The winter is past, or rather what they call winter, which to me has been more like spring. To-day we have sunshine and showers and thunder, like April in America, and have scarce needed a fire for the past two weeks.

We are five of us together in the same apartments, and have models every day, either of old bearded men or beautiful females or boys; there are many models in Rome, and good ones for form and color or character.

ROME, Apr. 18, 1840.

DEAR BROTHER, — When I read your letter by the Great Western, my first impulse was to start for home immediately. Unfortunate as I imagined you had been, I find I had formed but a poor estimate of the reality; it is too bad, after so much labor and vexation, to see the end we strove to gain still farther off, away in the misty distance. Perhaps after all, if we had attained, it might not have been better; it may be we have mistaken the road to happiness, that it may not depend upon *fortune*. I am glad to hear that you intend to continue the farm at Burlington, for I think there can be no place in the United States so advantageous and pleasant; hope to see you contented and happy as usual when I come back. But the “Destroyer” has been along the banks of the Delaware and crushed a flower;\* may he spare the “near in blood” till we meet! This is too much to expect, though, more than I ought to expect, to meet all that I left.

I will tell you what I wish to do now, which is to spend some time longer here in study, where the advantages are so great, so that I may be able, when I return home, to do my part in restoring our lost fortune. I feel my health improving so fast that I am confident I shall have nothing to fear in that, and if the success that is not denied to well-directed labor shall follow, it must be my own fault if I do not

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\* A young child of Ward's.



succeed. My expenses here amount to about twenty-five dollars a month ; I think this summer they will be less. The French Academy is free, as well as the Vatican, where I am daily occupied ; to leave advantages like these, after coming so far, seems a great sacrifice.

I don't know exactly the amount of funds which I hold of yours, but I think between 7,000 and 8,000 francs, which I have letters of credit for here ; now, as you may wish to avail yourselves of these before I should return (provided you object not to my stop here), how can the refund be made ? Would it be safe to return a letter of credit to Welles & Co. to Paris, directing them to forward the funds to you, considering the circumstances in regard to Remont ? I received a letter from him yesterday, dated in January, in which he duns me for amount due on last year's purchase ; if he should be disposed, could he in other ways bother me here ? However, I fear him not.

This is Holy Week, and great ceremonies will be performed, and to-morrow will be a great display of fireworks. The weather is spring-like and beautiful. Hope I shall hear from you soon.

Excuse this disjointed scrawl. When I sit down to write home, my mind is filled with so many conflicting thoughts that I cannot express what I would. I fear this will not arrive in England in season for the Great Western. Adieu. SEP.

P. S. Letters coming out arrive as soon by the packet by Havre as by the steamer, and of course at much less expense.

The mulberry bubble had burst, and the collapse was fearful. Mr. Whitmarsh, who had confidently expected to make \$250,000 before winter, was left without "cash or credit enough to buy a barrel of flour." But fortunately in 1838 Ralph Cheney had started a silk-mill for making sewing-silk, at South Manchester, which was afterwards incorporated as the Mt. Nebo Silk Manufacturing Co. The brothers, instead of yielding to failure, at once turned all their energies to developing this industry. Seth and John gave them their sympathy and help, as far as possible, and thus by a common effort they reaped success from defeat.

Seth returned home in 1840, determined to devote himself to drawing, and to support himself by his art.

## CHAPTER V.

## ARTISTIC LIFE.

IN the summer and autumn of 1840 Seth was in Manchester, and occupied in drawing in crayons. He lived and worked in the old homestead, and used the coarse, rough paper made at Bunce's mill, in his native town. Among these portraits are those of Mr. and Mrs. Bunce and their children, and admirable ones of his Aunt Emily and Uncle Horace Pitkin. The likenesses are very perfect, and the drawing is free, delicate, and spirited. His price at this time was five dollars. He went into Hartford for a short time, and took a studio there, making crayon portraits of his friend Mr. Cushman, a miniature-painter, of Mr. and Mrs. Bull of Hartford, and others. These drawings are highly prized for their truth and beauty as likenesses.

The most beautiful picture he had made abroad was of a little beggar-girl in Rome, of which he made a copy for a lady in Hartford; the original is at the homestead.

In the winter he went to Brattleboro', where he was engaged in making drawings for Olney's Geography, but he returned to Manchester in the summer, where his brothers were then busy in establishing silk-mills. He visited his friend Hills at Burlington, Vt., during this time.

HARTFORD, (May ?) 10, 1841.

DEAR WARD, — I got your letter only in time to write to Welles & Co., at Paris, by the steamship from Boston, of the 18th, but I think there is little chance of securing the funds now. Remont's executions (?) were doubtless false. I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing Monsieur; if he comes, why he can go back again, with his labor for his pains.

I am glad to see you write in such good spirits. I think we shall have a change of wind by and by, so that we can again get under way, but we will carry less sail than formerly, and keep a sharp look-out for shoals and quicksands.

I expected Frank up from New York to-day, but he did not come. I have no doubt he will succeed with the daguerreotype.

I came over here a few weeks ago, and am doing well with the crayon, "patronized by the nobility." The style seems to take very well here, and I shall be constantly employed for some months. I want to get time, though, to come and make a group of those two boys of yours in the course of the summer, besides making a drawing of yourself and Caroline.

Cushman is here painting miniatures, and doing pretty well; he keeps a horse and carriage here, so we ride out home Sundays, when the weather is good, which, by the way, has been very seldom this spring; to-day is the first warm Sunday we have had yet, the trees have scarcely begun to have the slightest appearance of green yet, the water is very high in the river from the melting of the snows above, and altogether it has been one of the most disagreeable springs I ever knew.

The Legislature is in session now, so there is great discussion of *shad* at our table, being the most important subject discussed by the members during their sojourn here; for how can a man do justice with an empty stomach? This was no doubt the reason why our wise ancestors chose this most propitious shad time for their deliberations, herein showing their profound knowledge of human nature.

John, I believe, intends returning to Philadelphia, this week, to finish his plates. Write me soon and tell all the news. Love to Carry.

Yours,

SEP.

In the autumn of 1841 he went to Boston with the determination of abandoning engraving, and trying his fortune in portraiture. He took a studio in Cornhill, and from thence he appears to have written this letter to John, although it is only dated

BOSTON, Jan. 28.

DEAR JOHN, — As I am confined to my room for a few days by an inflammation of the chest, and feel rather weak from loss of blood and

blistering and starving, I thought I could not better employ the weary moments than by writing you a line.

The handwriting shows how weak he was, but he goes on after a break, with a firmer touch.

I received your letter a day after I wrote you last. From reading I find you have not probably got my last in relation to the ruling-machine; which will occasion another delay in the matter. I told you then that from what Perkins and others said about those small machines, like Storm's, that I should not order one until I heard from you again, as from their accounts they were not worth having. You will consider me the most undecided of beings, I know, but recollect the two bumps on each side of my head.

What you proposed in regard to the remittance to mother is what I have been trying to come at ever since I came, and has been one of the greatest motives of exertion, but found it utterly impossible till last week to send her a sou, when it gave me real satisfaction to enclose forty dollars [manuscript illegible], an order on H. Hudson of Hartford, . . . which is due me for a portrait I have taken of his daughter. I shall be able to send some more next week, I hope. You see, when I came here, I had little more than five dollars in my pocket, and for nearly two months I received nothing for what I had done, so I got drained down to the last sixpence, which for three weeks lay solitary and alone in my poor pocket (I dared not even go to the post-office), and at last spent three cents of it for *charcoal* to begin a head, for which I got ten dollars, which I was obliged immediately to spend for *charcoal* to keep me warm, and so I was obliged to live on from hand to mouth, board-bills in arrears, and clothes ragged, and beginning to grow sick at heart, and think it a losing business, and wish I had not risked, but I gradually began to get my head out of water, and now, if I had nerves enough left, I suppose I might make a fortune, for no one could wish a better prospect than I have now; but alas! I have been a fool, — squandered my strength, so that a little over-exertion pulls me down. But enough of this, — I have only mentioned this that you might not think I had neglected and forgot past favors and obligations, and withheld my hand when I had the power to help.

I am glad to hear through Clark that Ward is getting settled again in Philadelphia. I hope he will succeed to his satisfaction. I hear,

too, that Rush proposes to join you in engraving. I have no doubt he will do well.

P. S. I shall probably go to work again on Monday.

WEDNESDAY [postmarked, Jan. 29].

DEAR MOTHER, — This is the first opportunity I have had of sending anything to you. When I first came I had but little to do and gained but little, and was obliged to spend all to meet my immediate wants; now it is otherwise, my prospects are good. I have already engagements to the amount of nearly \$1,000, and increasing every day; my room is thronged with visitors of the first class and the rich, so I hope to be able in the course of the year to be a little more free. I will send more in a few days. My health is good, able to work all day; no time to say more now. SEP.

These touching letters thus simply tell the story of his last struggle with poverty. He was indeed almost despairing, and was just about to write to John that he would give up the effort at drawing, and join him in engraving at Philadelphia, when relief came. The lady for whom he had made a copy of his beggar-girl wrote to Mrs. Dr. Putnam of Boston, begging her to go and see the artist; she did so, and gave him a commission for a portrait. The work was so thoroughly satisfactory that from this time Mrs. Putnam became one of his warmest friends, and he was at once introduced to the most refined and intelligent society of Boston, who appreciated his genius and gave him more commissions than he could execute.

BOSTON, Sunday, Jan. 18, 1842.

DEAR JOHN, — I wrote you some weeks ago about the machine. I have been expecting every day since to hear from you, and have got out of patience at last and determined to write you; let me know what you have concluded to do in regard to the machine. I am afraid I have been too undecided about it myself.

I am very busy now, and shall be for the winter; have under way and engaged *work* to the amount of \$700 and coming thicker and faster every day. Mothers have got crazy about their children. The greater number of my commissions are for children and boys and girls, —

*beautiful girls.* This is excellent study for me, besides being very agreeable. I shall learn pretty thoroughly, by such practice, the management of the head in drawing. I have laid by the palette entirely. I could not possibly have succeeded so well with that, for the novelty of the drawings goes a good way with many. Most of my commissions are from the "big folks" here. I often go to their houses to draw, and have a good chance to see what the "world is made of."

Electa is in good health and spirits, is learning to draw. I think she will succeed well. Gallaudet has a plate under way and seems in better spirits.

The weather has been fine so far, this winter, here ; I have suffered but little with cold, I think never less even in Italy. How has it been in Philadelphia, and how are you all ? Has Ward removed yet to the city ? I want to know all about mother and things there, and what you are engaged on at present. I hope that I shall by and by make something fit for you to engrave, but as yet I can't say that I have anything satisfactory. Do write soon. SEP.

Dr. Lardner is lecturing here ; gave one last night at the theatre, which was jammed ; commences a course at the Melodeon to-morrow. He is altogether the greatest lecturer I have ever heard, handles the subject in the most masterly manner. I wish Frank was here. What is Cushman about now ? Remember me to him.

The life in the dingy studio was not uncheered by friendship and the sympathy of fellow-students. Mr. Gould writes : —

"I saw Seth Cheney for the first time at his studio in Cornhill, Boston, a few doors from Court Street. Alpheus Morse introduced me to a tall spare man, of a leonine blond complexion, light-brown hair falling in curls to the shoulders, high forehead, eyes large, blue, and shady, a quivering sensibility in the cheeks while the mouth and chin were firm and still. He wore no beard. His large bony hand grasped mine. This was my friend. What I felt then, but did not know till afterward, was a certain continent sweetness in his disposition, which gave more and withheld more than any other.

"There was in that room an extemporized evening drawing school, without official head (the grandest head there declining the position), and Morse, with his natural eye for form and optimistic good temper, laughing his criticisms. A handsome young fellow with Greek profile,

Freeman by name, who was drowned soon after, and others met there to draw. The stairway was lighted by a candle stuck into a skull. I once brought up little Forrester Anderson, grandson of Pelby the actor, as a model. He drew a man as children do. 'Now make his boots,' said Seth, bending over him with loving humor. The child obeyed. 'Heels,' added Seth, — 'and now, nails.'

"John, Seth, and I went often to the theatre together, and were fond even of the circus, where fine figures were to be seen. One evening found us standing with negroes and sailors in the gallery of the Howard Athenæum, just under the roof (Seth in a blue cloak which had crossed the Atlantic six times), ravished by the tearful voice of stout Alboni in *La Sonnambula*.

"We met at the gymnasium and frequented the bowling-alley in company. Once he sent a ball that struck out two pins, and struck the canvas behind with a solid blow. He put up both hands, exclaiming, 'That hurts my head.' Again he forgot his turn, using the scoring chalk in a sketch on the wooden partition."

Mr. Morse also remembers with affectionate pleasure these days when they interchanged lessons. He once invited Seth to visit his home, and Seth drew a portrait of his mother which Dr. Frothingham called the finest head he ever saw. It was the first thing he exhibited at one of the annual Athenæum Exhibitions, and attracted much attention.

They attended Hudson's gymnasium together, and Morse was astonished at the muscular power of one who seemed so delicate, and who often complained of his head and lungs. Seth made a drawing of the fine, bold head of Hudson, which was also exhibited.

All who knew him at this time speak of the wonderful beauty of his face and the charm of his presence. He was welcomed into the best society, and formed tender and lasting friendships, but he remained ever as pure and simple and unconscious as in his boyhood.

He worked very hard, and his friends were astonished at what he accomplished, in spite of his frequent ill-health. "O, how

I have longed for health!" he said, in thinking of all he had wished to do in art. There is a list in one of his account-books of over one hundred and fifty heads, under the dates 1841 and 1842. Although this list probably covers the period up to his leaving for Europe again, in July, 1843, yet probably many things are omitted, and it certainly is a great deal of work for two years. The list of his sitters includes the names of Lowell, Jackson, Gray, Putnam, Appleton, Bowditch, Forbes, Perkins, Dixwell, Ward, Lawrence, Winthrop, Goddard, Higginson, and others well known in Boston. The portraits of Mrs. Horace Gray, and of Miss Appleton, a very young girl, were engraved by his brother, for annuals. His prices at this time ranged from ten to fifty dollars. There is an exquisite beauty in these early portraits, unsurpassed even by the work of his later life, in perception of character and spiritual grace. His execution was free and delicate, and it seemed as if his spirit had breathed itself into form on the paper. As in the music of the violin the least possible material means seemed necessary to convey his thought. It was of this time that Theodore Parker wrote thus in his journal: —

“About 1840 Miss Burley told me of the fine genius and finer moral endowments of Mr. Cheney. He made some crayons for her family then, which I admired much. In 1841 or 1842 Mr. George Russell sat in another artist's room, and heard a conversation in the next apartment, relative to the sermon of ‘The Transient and Permanent in Christianity.’ One was attacking it and its author. Mr. R. learned that the defender was Mr. Cheney, an artist with fine genius. I was surprised to find an artist who thought enough about religion to venture from the beaten paths of theology, and still more to find he was from the heart of Connecticut.”\*

Seth was fully interested in the thought and feeling of that time. He was entirely in sympathy with the transcendental

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\* Weiss, Life of Parker, vol. i. p. 291.



movement, which harmonized with his lofty idealism and pure religious sentiment, and he was intimate with many of those engaged in it. He frequently attended Mr. W. H. Channing's religious services, and once left his room with the intention of joining the society, but some doubts as to his full agreement with the views of the Associationists prevented him from doing so. He attended the conversations at Miss E. P. Peabody's, and had great delight in Mr. Emerson's lectures.

His pictures at this time, especially his heads of women, seem to express the very spirit of this epoch.

In 1843 Seth again went to Europe. He had been very successful in his drawing, and found abundant employment at home, but he yearned for opportunities of study and artistic employment in Europe, and there was now nothing in his circumstances to prevent his indulging his inclinations, as he had earned enough by his work to pay his expenses, and his family were no longer in need of assistance.

He always considered it advantageous for an artist to go frequently to Europe, when he felt his own defects and difficulties in art, that he might learn from the great masters there; but he thought his own country the true place for work. As we fortunately possess several letters written during this journey, I can tell the story of it mainly in his own words.

LONDON, July 23, 1843.

DEAR JOHN, — We had a pleasant voyage of nineteen days to Portsmouth, so short that I can hardly realize that I am in London, when I think of the long passages that I have made across the Atlantic. Nothing happened to mention during the voyage, which to me was a perfect blank in existence, as I wished it to be. I had no pain in this head of mine while on the water, and very little after I landed, as I always have for a few days after a voyage.

I found Huntington here and Van Bright. I have a room next to them here in Salisbury St. Strand, not far from Charing Cross, which is a much more convenient part of London than the vicinity of Fitz-

roy Square, where I formerly was. Van Bright goes home the first of August.

Huntington goes to the Continent in two or three weeks, and will pass the winter there in Italy. I wonder if I can resist the temptation to accompany him; it is doubtful. I have not made up my mind to any place distinctly, yet, if I should feel pretty brave, I shall probably go with him; if not, shall return, as I intended, in the fall.

Our old friend Terry is still in Italy, and expects to meet us the first of September in Venice, where he intends spending a short time, and then returning to Rome again for the winter. I confess the thought of being again amongst those beautiful works of art, with the same companions, is glorious, — too much for one poor mortal to enjoy twice, I fear.

I arrived in season to see the Exhibition at the Royal Academy; it will be open a week longer. I think it much like the other exhibitions I have seen there; nothing great. Turner is more extravagant than ever in his landscapes. Except a picture of Eastlake's, "Hagar and Ishmael," I don't recollect one that gave me much pleasure.

I have been delighted with the collection in the British Institution. The large room is filled with some of the most beautiful of Sir Joshua Reynolds's works; there is the "Strawberry Girl," full of nature, and the "Girl Sleeping," and a dozen other most exquisite things. What I have seen there gives me a higher idea than I had of him, — much.

There are also some fine Cuyps and one or two Claudes, and many others by old masters. Those landscapes of Claude's in the National Gallery look to me more glowing than ever.

I went to Dulwich the other day; started in a tremendous shower. What beautiful Cuyps there are here, so light and sunny! *The soul of Cuyp came to the earth on a sunbeam.* Is that sublime or ridiculous? When I came out of the Gallery the sky was clear and pleasant, and I saw in nature more glorious things than in Cuyp.

Dan [Huntington] and I went to Hampton Court to see the cartoons. Burnet gives a capital idea of them in those etchings you have; they are not so much finished as I expected to find them, but seem done with a great deal of spirit. I saw yesterday Mr. Sheepshanks's collection of modern pictures; he has some of Mulready's and Leslie's. Mulready is certainly the best artist in England, — perhaps I should except Eastlake, whose style is higher. Mr. Vernon, too, has a fine

collection of modern works, which I saw to-day. Mr. Leslie gave me a card of admission.

I accidentally found our old friend Dubourjal here soon after I came; he is well, says he has not much to do in Paris. I have persuaded him to go to Boston, — he will probably sail in September. I think he will do well there, don't you? I know you will like to see him; you can be of great use to him in introducing him to some of our friends there. He intends to return to Paris next week, and give up his room, and sell what he does not want there, and sail from Havre, August 2d.

I sent a roll of paper by the Victoria, Captain Morgan, which will be left on board till called for. Ward will probably know when she arrives. I could not get the tints I wanted, exactly. Kimberley wanted some of it; I got it here for eight shillings a quire. I intended to have sent some casts, but they are not dry, so shall postpone it till I return here next year. By the way, I have not told you, Dan, his wife, and I have engaged our passage in the steamer for Antwerp to-morrow morning. I could not make up my mind to return, after coming so far, without seeing some of the fine things on the Continent. We intend going by the Rhine to Basle and Geneva, to cross the Simplon, and return by the way of Dresden and Vienna. I thought, for the sake of company, I preferred to take this route; the others can be passed at all seasons, which is not the case with the Simplon pass.

I wrote mother by the Mediator of the 20th July, from Portsmouth; hope you are all well. I shall not hear from you till I get to Florence, where I have directed your letters to be sent after I leave here. Direct *clearly* to care of Baring Brothers & Co., London.

I was disappointed in not getting a word from you by the steamer. We heard with deep regret of the death of Allston. Two of the brightest stars have set within the last year, Channing and Allston; but such men cannot be said to die, for their influence on us is perhaps greater after they have left our earth. We bless the sun for the deep and solemn twilight he leaves behind him.

Aug. 3, 1843.

Left London this morning at 12½ o'clock, in steamer Soho, bound for Antwerp, in company with H. [Huntington] and wife. I was happy to escape the turmoil and smoke of London. Deliver us from

great cities ; there is no peace nor quiet in them ; besides, I like a climate where the sun shines one whole day in a year, which I have not seen here.

4th. — Going on deck this morning, saw the lofty spire of Antwerp Cathedral towering above the low, flat country. After being detained on board about two hours for the agreeable purpose of having our baggage overhauled by the custom-house officers, we landed, and here we are at the Hotel St. Antoine. The first object of curiosity is Rubens's famous picture of the "Descent from the Cross," the design of which is taken from the fresco of Daniello del Volterra, in Rome, but, with all its gorgeous color and effect of reality, to me far less elevated and imposing than the fresco. In the church of St. Jacques, over the tomb of Rubens, is a picture of his representing the Holy Family, containing the portraits of himself and family. This picture has less of the grossness of the painter, and is touched with more delicacy, but in all there is a want of that elevated sentiment and refinement which throws such a charm over the works of the divine Raphael. In the Museum there are many of Rubens's pictures. The "Christ crucified between two Thieves" is altogether the most horrible picture I ever saw. The executioner is in the act of breaking the legs of one of the two thieves, who, in his last agony, tears his feet from the nails that hold them to the cross. The expression of his face haunts you forever. I wish never to see another of his pictures. I confess I have never seen a religious subject of his that excited in me the slightest devotional feeling.

*Brussels, 5th.* — Last night we arrived here by the railroad, about nine o'clock, and being obliged to stop here to get our passports signed by the different ministers, we in the mean time went to the field of Waterloo, situated about twelve miles from the city. The high mound raised over the spot where the Prince of Orange fell is the most conspicuous object in the field. The ground is slightly undulating, the field waving with rich grain. I gathered a few flowers and a wheat-head for you, Electa, for here blossom flowers even on the field of strife.

*Liege, 6th, Sunday.* — Left Brussels about five o'clock last night, and arrived here at nine, a distance of sixty miles by railroad, over a flat country and highly cultivated. Liege is an old town, beautifully situated in the valley of the Meuse. My companion *de voyage* having

conscientious scruples in regard to Sunday travelling, we rest here to-day. This afternoon we have taken a stroll about the town, and ascended the height that overlooks the city, and saw the sun set beautifully over it.

*Aix la Chapelle, 8th.* — We came here *en vetturin*, and a most delightful ride we had of six hours, through the richest fields of ripe wheat I ever saw in any country. The farmers appeared to be in the midst of harvest, standing sheaves and ripe fields, ready for the sickle; the landscape varied with beautiful distance.

*Cologne, 8th.* — Arrived about two o'clock last evening, by railroad, from Aix la Chapelle, and stopped at the Bellevue Hotel on the opposite side, from which we had a fine view of Cologne and the Rhine by a beautiful moonlight. This morning we have walked over the city and seen its magnificent Cathedral. Though unfinished, it is one of the most pure and beautiful Gothic churches on the Continent, or perhaps in the world. After this we went to the Museum to see Bendemann's picture, "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept." This is one of the finest of modern pictures. I would rather have been the painter of this one picture than all that Rubens has ever done. Arrived about sunset at Coblenz, situated at the confluence of the Rhine and Moselle. This is one of the most picturesque points on the river.

To-day, the 9th, having time, before the boat left for Mayence, I wandered alone across the beautiful bridge of the Moselle and along its banks. I was reminded of the scenes on the Connecticut, but farther up I believe it is more precipitous. Returning through Coblenz, I met some of the most beautiful children playing about the streets that I have seen for a long time. By the way, I was not pleased with the English children. There is too much of the archness that we sometimes see in Sir Joshua Reynolds's pictures of them, and which does not suit the character of children. As we get along towards the Alps, I observe more natural grace in the women, and seldom see "put-on airs." I am constantly meeting with that simplicity so pleasing and so well expressed in the German pictures. Every action to the mind of the observer conveys an idea of expression. Crossing the Rhine on the bridge of boats, we ascended the heights of Ehrenbreitstein. From this point we have a glorious prospect. It will be absurd for me to attempt to describe this noble river, which far

surpasses in grandeur any that I have had the good fortune to see. I say this independent of its associations. We have seen it under much more favorable circumstances than before. The weather has been fine and clear since we came on the river, and to-day, the 10th of August, the weather is perfectly serene and calm. In fact, since we left England, the skies have become every day more bright. While I was in England I suffered terribly from depression of spirits. I attributed it partly to the foggy, wet, and pent-up atmosphere of that country; \* for as I gradually approach a more sunny clime, and breathe the pure air, and can look up to the mountains and the blue sky beyond, I feel a great load lifted from my sad heart, and begin again to enjoy existence, to see some bright spots and glimpses of happiness, where all before seemed dark and a desert.

We came to Mayence in the evening, and went immediately on board of a night boat bound for Strasburg. It was a soft moonlight, and the passage through a flat country a perfect contrast to what we have passed below, and after the excitement of the scenes during the day an agreeable repose. We arrived at Mannheim early in the morning, and H., going on deck after the passengers for that place had landed, missed one of his trunks containing forty sovereigns in gold, many of his sketches and prints, with books and clothes, in all to the amount of about three hundred dollars. It was probably taken through mistake by some of the passengers. H. had time to give a description of it to the agent of the boat on shore, who promised to send it to Strasburg by the next boat. Though he had but little hope of recovering it, yet it arrived safe the next day, as promised.

Our boat having broken a paddle-wheel through the carelessness of the pilot's running too near the shore, we arrived late, about ten, at Strasburg. Wandering about this morning, we find it one of the most picturesque old towns I have seen. The Cathedral, you know, is famous. Crossing the market-place, we were attracted by one of the most beautiful women we ever recollected to have seen. She was sitting with a child in her arms, and was one of the market-women. There was something in this face that I have never seen in pictures, not even in Raphael, — a most finely chiselled mouth and nose, not

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\* At a later period of life he liked the English climate except in autumn, and thought he felt well there. I think England is not the country of youth.

too much roundness, but all exquisitely defined ; neither was there too much of the Grecian in the line of the face. This morning heard grand mass in the Cathedral. None can be unmoved at the sublime effect produced by the chanting of the mass in one of these old Gothic churches ; the innocent voices of boys, the rougher tones of the priest, murmuring with the deep diapason of the vast organ, remind us of that sublime mass that nature pours forth in the mingled song of birds, the gurgling of murmuring brooks, in the rushing winds and the roar of the ocean.

GENEVA, Aug. 21.

We came here Thursday by the way of Basle and the Lake Neufchâtel, Lausanne, and Lake Geneva ; since then have been to Chamouni, and ascended the Mont Cevennes, and have walked on the Mer de Glace. Of course it will be perfectly ridiculous for me to describe these scenes. On the top of Mont Cevennes I bought a snuff-box for mother, made of agate from one of the high points of the Mer de Glace.

After resting here a few days, we intend crossing the Alps. I have not heard a word from home since I left ; sometimes wish I was there. Let me hear from you as often as I can. I wish I could do justice to the scenes I pass through in description, but I have no words. Hope you will excuse the meagre account.

In giving these letters and other descriptions of people and pictures just as they are written, it must be remembered that letters are always the expression of a mood, not the well-considered criticism of permanent thought. Rubens never was a favorite with Seth. He could not find a congenial mind in him, yet he often dwelt with pleasure at a later period on his acknowledged excellences in coloring, especially in landscape. He once said he would like to take from Rubens's pictures in the Louvre hands and other parts full of technical beauties. Rubens was an able painter, not a great artist.

His friend Morse had gone to Italy the preceding year, and was then in Florence with the family of Mr. Clevenger, the sculptor, who was ill and poor. Their means were almost wholly

gone, when Mr. Cheney arrived in Florence, and was hailed with the greatest joy. He at once shared his funds with his brother artists.

A delightful party was formed to go to Rome together by Vettura, — Mr. and Mrs. H. K. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Huntington, Mr. Freeman, Mr. Terry, Mr. De Vaux a Southern artist who died early, Mr. Morse, and Mr. Cheney. Those of the party still living look back to it as one of the richest and happiest passages of life. They saw a beautiful peasant girl at Lake Bolsena, and almost frightened her out of her senses by their eagerness to make drawings of her.

At Rome, Morse, De Vaux, and Seth lived together in an old street leading from the Corso, where they had delightful times, sometimes studying, and sometimes practising the art of cooking maccaroni, as learned from their Italian cook.

An American gentleman, finding that the English, Germans, and French had their life schools, furnished money enough to support an American school for several years. This was the last year of its existence, but our artists profited well by it. The teacher was Ferrero, and his clear, exact lessons were always remembered by Seth with great gratitude. He laid great stress upon exactness and delicacy in outline, often revealing to them the nice expression of slight variations in the form. He also laid great stress on the focussing of light and shadow so that the effect should be clear. Seth often recalled the "troppo confuso," which was the old man's most frequent criticism of his work, and he would often say, "Every shadow has its darkest point, every light its brightest." Ferrero was a fine anatomist, and his plate illustrating the anatomy and proportions of the human figure was Seth's constant study to the end of his life.

He made a drawing of the daughter of Camuccini, the painter, which was engraved by his brother.



FLORENCE, Sept. 21.

DEAR JOHN, — I wrote you last from Geneva. Since then I have kept no notes of my journey. We arrived here on the 15th, exactly four years from the time we came here before.

I have suffered somewhat from depression of spirits, which I attribute to the fatigue of travelling and the irregularity of living one is subjected to while on the road. After resting sometime I shall be all right again. I found Brown and wife here very comfortably situated. He is full of commissions for copies and originals, and has improved very much. I have been to Powers's studio to-day; the Eve is certainly a beautiful statue. There was a bust for Mr. Carey, of Proserpine, which I like as well too. I am glad it goes to America. Morse is here, and intends spending the winter here in Florence. Poor Clevenger sailed last week from Leghorn, but from all accounts it seems doubtful whether he ever reaches home, on account of his ill-health. There are a good many American artists here now. There will be in Rome this winter from fifteen to twenty.

These works of Raphael look more beautiful than ever to me, and the sight of them well pays the long journey to see them; and Florence, too, is a delightful place. I wish you were here, John, to enjoy it. The weather is clear and fine, the air soft and balmy, which disposes the mind to reverie and repose; but I am changed since I was here before, — I look at things with a more serious eye, and not with the same boyish enthusiasm as formerly. I seem to have grown suddenly old, and the past seems a dream, the present only the reality. The recollection of the past seems more agreeable than the present, but perhaps the present may bring more good, for I have been led to examine myself and look back to scrutinize the motives of action; I find, with regret, they have not always been the highest.

I am disposed now to think that a belief in a "Divinity that shapes our ends" must tend to elevate our thoughts and actions, and give us that peace of mind which we search after so long, and find not elsewhere. How I envy the peace of the humble believer I see kneel at the altar of his God, and offer up his prayers and thanks to the Giver of all Good, and go to his hard daily toil with a calm and quiet conscience, trusting that whatever his fate may be, some wise purpose is intended and in the end must be the best! I shall, after all my doubting, become a firm believer, and I hope a good Christian. May God

grant it! I am persuaded nothing else can satisfy this restless spirit; in whatever circumstances, I have been always unsatisfied. This belief and trust will, I hope, produce the desired repose.

I am coming gradually to draw from models. I shall go to sketch in the Pitti Palace and the gallery.

FLORENCE.

DEAR JOHN, — Why did you not write by the last steamer? Is somebody dead? I always imagine so when I do not hear, though they say no news is good news. I have been here a little more than a month now, and been horribly homesick sometimes, but it is past now, and I am growing fat, go to the gymnasium, and am in better spirits than I have been for the last six months, brain clearer, and begin to enjoy nature and art again, — hope to be strong enough to do a good winter's work in Rome, where we intend going in a week or so. There will be fifteen or twenty American artists in Rome this winter. I intend to set seriously about the study of the human figure this winter; in the mean time, too, I can make some sketches from medals which I hope may be of some use to you, besides some finished drawings from Raphael and Michael Angelo, which will go towards paying expenses, as I can dispose of them in Boston at a good price. I have not been in the mood of doing anything very serious since I have been here, and have spent the time in looking at the galleries and sketching. I have made a little pencil drawing from a model which perhaps you may like, — did not begin it with the intention of making a picture. Morse was painting from the model, and to pass the time I sat down to make a mere outline, which pleasing me, I worked on and brought out what I will send with Dan's\* picture, which he sends next week from Leghorn. I am sorry now I did not make a large crayon drawing of the subject. I will make some in Rome this winter.

Dan sends his regards. Carey wished him to make a picture to send by the next steamer for you to engrave, but he says he cannot, but will do something in Rome in the course of a month or so.

Dan has just come in, and proposes that I should send my drawing in this letter. The mail goes in an hour, so I have not time to finish it as I intended; besides, I am not sure that it is worth the extra

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\* Huntingdon.

postage, but you must make Carey pay that if he makes use of it. It may get spoiled in going by rubbing.

Morse is here; we have roomed together of late. Another winter here will be of great use to him.

DEAR MOTHER, — I hoped to hear from you ere this, but I suppose my letter had a long passage. John wrote me that you had been sick. I hope you have recovered entirely. I often regret that I have made so long a way between us, but I shall return to you a changed being and with a different mind: doubts, and the darkness that have so long rested on my mind have passed away, and the "calm peace and quiet" of faith has taken their place. I begin now to read the Bible with pleasure and profit, and find great consolation in its truths, and wonder that I should so long have neglected its divine precepts; but there are minds that must pass through the shadowy vale of doubts ere they reach the sunshine of faith beyond. The 113th Psalm expresses what I feel now better than any words that I can say.

Electa, will you copy and send to me Longfellow's "Psalm of Life"? I should like, too, Bryant's "Thanatopsis," but that is too long for you to write. Let me hear from you. I have not heard a word since I left. John said nothing of you in his letter. Do write soon.

SEP.

ROME, Dec. 20, 1843.

DEAR JOHN, — I have received two letters since I wrote you, and one from Electa, — a most delightful one and unexpected. I confess it makes me homesick to think how many I have left behind, but it is only in absence that one can estimate their true value, and know how dear, above all the world else, are those to whom we are bound by the closest of all ties.

I am glad you have concluded to remain in Boston. There must be much more there to excite an artist than in Philadelphia. Those works of Allston are almost a substitute for the Vatican; they are conceived in the true style. He appears, I think, to have had a mind more like Correggio than any other man's, and like him too in character.

When I think, John, of all those great minds, Channing and Allston, living and trusting, all their thoughts and actions elevated by, and dying at last in some religious faith, I am disposed to despise

my own petty mind that has presumed to doubt its truth. Let us look at this before we regret it, — we may find something that we dreamed not of.

I am occupied now in making sketches from models, but particularly in studying the anatomy of the human figure, and drawing, under Ferrero, the engraver. I find I must make a school-boy of myself again. I hope in the course of the winter to get a good general knowledge of the figure, and a better and more decided style of drawing. As for color, I think I had better let that alone for the present. You will find a slate an excellent thing to draw on, as it does not affect the eyes so much, and the alterations can be made in the outlines with much greater facility, which can afterwards be transferred to paper by tracing. Though it seems to be the longest, yet I believe it is in the end the quickest way of drawing.

The paper I sent by the *Victoria* instead of the *Mediator*, as you supposed. You can now get it by applying to Captain Morgan, as I directed to have it left on board until called for.

De la Roche is here on account of ill-health. I hope it is not a serious illness.

I wrote you some time ago about funds. As I shall probably return very early in the spring, I should like to have you send what money you can conveniently get together on my account. I think about \$200 or \$500 would be enough, and enable me to get some prints besides, which I should like to do. Charles owes me \$150; perhaps he could send you some. There is some way of forwarding bills of exchange to Baring's, they tell me, so that it would not be necessary to send them to me and have them again returned. It would save time and expense.

I wish I could make out a more entertaining letter from the "Eternal City," but I can't say what I would on paper, so must have a longer talk when we meet again.

ROME, Jan. 16, 1844.

(How time flies, John !)

DEAR JOHN, — I have just got your letter of the 18th of December, enclosing a draft for which I am much obliged. I received yours of the 1st December, too, in due time. I ought to be the happiest mortal in existence, for I always get such good news from you in this

far-off country, but, John, I am not. I can't set about anything serious in the way of art yet. My mind flies from one thing to another, and has no settled purpose. There is so much here in Rome to do, and one feels his own deficiencies so sensibly, that it sometimes has the effect of disheartening him ; but I hope to get some benefit from the sight of these great works, to fill the mind with their spirit while I am here, though I shall not accomplish much with my hand, so that the effect will be in perspective. What you ask in regard to Raphael's works can better be answered in his own words, that "to make one beautiful object it is necessary to see many ;" and adds, also, "mi servo di certa idea che mi viene alla mente." I have seen studies for the School of Athens of groups which seem made from individual models with all their peculiarities and accidental costume, which in the finished picture are clothed with flowing draperies and made philosophers. The model served more for the idea of action, — the character and expression he drew from his own observation of the infinite variety in nature rather than from an individual model. Why should we confine ourselves to one object when the whole universe is filled with beauty ?

I am sorry to hear of the unfinished state of Mr. Allston's pictures. I hope the outlines and drawings will not find their way out of the country, though I fear the "Titania's Court" will go to England. I wish you had made an engraving of that. Those are great things. I look back on them with the greatest pleasure, and rejoice that after leaving these fine things here I shall have them to fall back upon.

It will be observed that Mr. Cheney often speaks in these letters of a state of depression. This was not infrequent with him throughout life. It was undoubtedly partly hereditary, and partly increased by ill-health, and a want of knowledge of sanitary conditions. Full of enthusiasm and capable of working with great intensity and concentration of power, and not having had the advantage of that thorough early mental training which would have helped him to husband his resources, he often exhausted his brain by long-continued excited labor, and

did not take sufficient rest and food to balance it. Depression of spirits was the natural consequence, but even in this condition his natural characteristics were always fully manifest. He had wonderful self-control, and when undergoing great mental suffering he would not betray it at all to a careless eye, and often those who knew him best would perceive it only by an unnatural calmness. He was never morose or ungentle or unkind, and always sought rather to dissipate his melancholy by solitude or converse with nature or by music than to intrude it upon others and demand their sympathy. He also understood his own state of mind, and never referred it to false causes. But his joyous moods were like the sunshine, irradiating and cheering and inspiring all within their influence.

The religious expressions in these letters are deeply interesting, and show how prone he was to converse with heavenly things. He was extremely sympathetic and catholic in his nature, and while he went on constantly to freer and broader views of theology, he also "unlearned contempt," and was never guilty of harshness to those who did not think with him. After he became free from the bondage of the old traditions which were around him in his childhood, he cared little to discuss them, but cared much for the development of spiritual and moral life. He found the essence of religion, and it gave him peace and strength in the final hours of life, with no reference to dogmas.

Friends of intense positive forms of faith often supposed he was, or would be, a convert to their particular church, because he had the habit of listening reverently and sympathetically to those who were earnest and sincere in their utterances; but

"To sect or party his large soul  
Disdained to be confined;  
The great he loved, of every age,  
The good of all mankind."

He rarely attended church services, but found food for his religious nature in music, art, and poetry, and the communion with Nature and his friends. Yet he was by no means indifferent, and was never so excited as by harsh, narrow, and dogmatic expressions of Calvinism. When some bigot dared to intimate that a good man not a church-member "had gone to hell," Seth declared that if God would condemn such a man to hell, he would rather go with him than go to heaven. He once became so excited by a controversy with a Calvinist minister that he did not get over it for many days. At a later period he was much indebted to Theodore Parker for clearing up his intellectual doubts, for showing him the Bible and Jesus in a new light, and giving them again to his love and reverence. His own faith was in the goodness of God and the immortality of the soul, and although his mind was sometimes clouded by depression his faith always returned to strengthen him. When in Italy he was once in a very depressed state of mind for several days. One Sunday morning he felt this mood even more deeply than usual. He had a conversation with a friend who was of the Calvinistic school of faith, but this only darkened his spirit the more. He walked out, and wandered into the churches, but psalm and prayer and mass had no effect upon him and he turned to come out. As he passed into the porch a peasant-woman entered, bearing her babe in her arms. She stopped at the font of holy water and crossed her baby's brow, and as she did so such an expression of divine love and human joy came into her face as went straight to his heart and healed him of his pain. How little did that *madonna* know what she had done!

Becoming very homesick, he decided to return home. But when all was arranged, and he had even gone a stage on his journey, he was seized with an intense desire to stay in Italy. Racked by a conflict of feelings, he was in agony. At last he

knelt in earnest prayer, such as he had never known before. Then the whole room seemed to be full of angels who came and ministered unto him. He arose calm and went on his way homeward. So powerful was this impression that more than ten years afterward, on his death-bed, he referred to it as a source of strength and consolation. "He hath given his angels charge concerning thee."

This entry occurs in a note-book:—

*Apr. 23, '44.*—Left Rome at seven o'clock with a sad and beating heart. The great bell of St. Peter's tolled solemn and mournful tones in my heart that seemed a death-knell. Oh, who can count the miseries of a hypochondriac? Phantoms are, after all, more terrible than the real, for these we may subdue and conquer, but the spirit, who shall lay that? "Shadows have struck more terror than could the substance of ten thousand."

In the same note-book are Bryant's poem, "The groves were God's first temples," and another beginning "My friend, thou sorrowest for thy golden prime."

One of the few pictures he ever signed is an admirable head of an old beggar man, dated Rome, 1844. Its wonderful light and shadow show how well he had profited by Ferrero's teaching.

Seth returned home with Mr. Morse directly from Italy. They took passage in a new fine sailing-ship owned in America, the captain being part-owner. Owing to a difficulty in getting their tobacco, the crew refused to weigh anchor on the appointed day. The captain, being provoked at this, declared he would sail the next day at any rate. Everything foreboded a storm, and the harbor is a very dangerous one. Still the captain sailed. The storm came on furiously, and in the attempt to take in sail, a fine young sailor was knocked overboard and taken up insensible. There was no surgeon on board, and Seth took charge of him and bled him with a penknife. This prompt measure was thought to have saved his life. He was taken to a hospital.



Mr. Morse says the perfect coolness and self-possession of Mr. Cheney under these circumstances was astonishing. Although usually a victim of seasickness, he was perfectly well during the excitement of the storm. The captain entirely lost his presence of mind, and was obliged to give up the command of the ship to the mate, who put back to Leghorn. They remained there two weeks before sailing again, and were then fifty-two days on the voyage home.

## CHAPTER VI.

## MARRIAGE AND LIFE IN AMERICA.

SETH returned to America in the summer of 1844, and the following letter shows how he was occupied during the autumn.

FROM MRS. WARD CHENEY TO HER SISTER.

DEC. 22, 1844.

Seth is still here ; he will leave for Boston next week. He has been taking Electa's portrait for Richard ; it is a perfect likeness. He is now taking Ward, and as far as he has progressed it is capital. The boys (or rather Seth) have been enlarging that little bedroom that goes out east, into a fine large room for mother's sleeping-room, so it may be comfortable, and she not be obliged to go up stairs. Seth did nearly all the work himself, as there was a scarcity of carpenters and masons just at that time. I never saw such a fellow ; he can do anything and everything ; he laid all the brick, built the chimney up to the top, did the plastering and most of the carpentering, has put a fine yellow wash on the room, and hung pictures up and arranged plants, and you can't imagine what a delightful room it is. I never go into it but it reminds me of a picture.

CARRY.

He then went to Boston and thus writes to his sister : —

BOSTON, Jan. 12, (probably 1845).

DEAR ELECTA, — I did not get your letter till yesterday morning, on account of the carrier not knowing my address. Miss Morse received your present on the day of her marriage ; it was admired by all ; I have not yet seen it, but shall. Caroline [Doane] invited me to stay with her ; so I am here pleasantly situated, and feel almost at home.

I am in excellent health and spirits. I have not yet taken a room, but am feeling every day more like going ahead again ; am attacked at every corner to do something. I have been visiting about amongst my old friends, and meet with a cordial welcome everywhere ; have more friends than I deserve, I fear, but it is pleasant to be remembered.

Have you heard anything of this new science they call Neurology ? One describes the character of a person by holding a letter of his in the hands. Miss —— has the faculty, and has described many with wonderful certainty, without any previous knowledge of the writer. After holding the letter a few minutes she begins to describe her sensations, or rather the impressions she receives of the character of the individual who wrote the letter. Often, too, scenes that are described in the letter are impressed on her mind. I went with Seth Wells yesterday, who carried a letter from a friend of his. After giving many traits of the character of the person, she laughed at the queer impression that all at once came to her mind of a river running through a hilly, or, as she said, a bluff country, with pine-trees and lumber floating down. In the letter Seth gave her was a description of a down-East river !!! My character has been read too, some time ago, from a letter I wrote at Geneva in my former visit there. From it she received the impression of glorious mountain scenery, etc., which they told me was described in the letter. I have not seen it, the book in which her characters are written being out of town. I don't know what to think of it myself ; I am not disposed to disbelieve in the power.

At this time, 1845, he was in the maturity of his genius and activity. He had gained much in technical skill by his residence abroad, and worked with more confidence and ease. Yet he always was diffident and distrustful of his own merit. He came home to a large circle of friends and admirers, all ready to give him commissions. His price was gradually raised from fifty to seventy-five and one hundred dollars, so that his pecuniary anxieties were ended. Forty-seven portraits are charged under the date 1845 ; they are almost entirely of Boston people, except a few in New Bedford and one of William C. Bryant.

Among them is a portrait of the celebrated philanthropist, Miss Dorothea Dix, which became the property of the Boston Athenæum, one of his own mother, and a charming group of two children of Rev. James Freeman Clarke, which was a present from his parish. Mr. Clarke says, in his letter of thanks, "this is fulfilling the dream of our lives."

The list of portraits recommences with the date April, 1846, but includes only twenty-four portraits, all of them Boston names. He was apparently exhausted by work, and retired to Manchester for the summer months.

In the summer of 1846 he was at Manchester, and here a long attachment to his cousin, Miss Emily Pitkin, resulted in acknowledged betrothal. She was a person of uncommon beauty, and great warmth and sweetness of character, with lively, attractive manners, which made her a general favorite. To one of Seth's nature such an event brought the deepest spiritual experience, and he constantly struggled with the painful sense of unworthiness, which made him shrink from the thought of taking another's happiness into his charge. At the request of her sister, Mrs. Sherman, he kept a journal during this period. His health was exceptionally poor, and affected his spirits so much that this journal is filled with expressions of intense mental suffering. Yet he seems to recognize that this heavy weight comes from his own physical condition, and he never fails to recognize the blessings of his lot, and the beauty of nature about him. It would be unfair to repeat these expressions, for a journal gives vent to the most morbid feelings, and rarely records the healthy and bright moments when one is too happy for self-inspection; but even this record reveals his tender love for those around him, and an entire absence of bitterness or suspicious feeling towards others. Himself he blames for all his sufferings. A few brief extracts will illustrate these remarks.

JULY 1, 1846.

Made a promise with Esther to keep a journal for a year of my useless existence. What have I to say to-day? Like the day my thoughts have been cloudy and dark, though I am surrounded with every circumstance to make man happy, am in my old home in the midst of those dear to me, am sitting in the very room where I was born; yet I am not satisfied, but look with regret on the past, with apprehension and sometimes with despair to the future, and wish that I might lay down what my gloomy imagination pictures the heavy burthen of existence, and sleep the sleep of death; but then a sunny spot gleams in the dark landscape, and then existence seems a blessing, and I resolve to bear bravely the "ills that flesh is heir to." . . . I have been constantly occupied since my return; have now over forty heads to be taken off.

Worked an hour on Mr. H.'s portrait; walked with John down the way of the old school-house, regret to find it moved. Stood on the site, and thought of the old time, the innocent time of childhood. Where are they all who came to con the a b c, one after another? There stands the old butternut-tree; there runs the little brook we paddled in at noon-time. How few like me ever return to look on the same spot! How many were gathered in the bud and blossom, and laid sweetly and untainted in their graves! Happy such to escape the storms of life! Would I were lying quietly by their side! But let me have patience and bide my time. I like to gather wild-flowers more than in gardens. Went to Hartford; on the way overtook an elderly man and asked him to ride, but, alas, poor man! speech he had not, but action, and how much more expressive than words! Let us not always be babbling. Are words more expressive than actions? How much a look may convey to those we love! How much silence may speak! This is the way of Nature, or, if she speaks, it is in the "still, small voice."

*July 4.* — They say it never rains on this day; it rained this morning, and we anticipated a sorry time for the children who came to celebrate Independence, and partake of the collation under the trees by the church, but it held up soon. I reached the church just as they were forming the procession, and a beautiful sight it was to look upon them, and amusing to see them cram their mouths and pockets with the sweet things profusely spread before them, — the table-cloth was

spread with long sheets of white paper, not a bad idea. In the evening a display of fireworks at the head of the lane, but, on account of the dampness of the weather, they were not so brilliant as they might be. The balloon went off beautifully, and was the best part of the show [a fire balloon he had made].

*July 5.* — Oh the luxury of going barefoot! I have tramped about, and am happy as a child again. I do not wonder at the child's impatience to get off its shoes in warm weather that he may pat along freely in every puddle, and strip the daisy heads with his toes; barring the occasional stings and thorns, he is in paradise. I never look with entire contempt on myself except with a tight pair of boots on in a hot day, and thick coat with pantaloons strapped down, and black beaver on my head, and gloves on my hands, in the streets of a city. A free man may have lost all his friends, without a sou in his pocket, and still have some respect for himself individually. I believe half the minor troubles come from clothes, but he who can walk on serene with pinched corns is a philosopher indeed. . . .

*July 6.* — Decapitated four old hens, and made a fire in the oven for mother, and afterward joined Rush to go to Willimantic, and a most delightful time I had of it. The country never looked so fine, a dark rich green; it has rained every day for three weeks: the Hop River road ran along beautifully through the valleys and by the hedges and brooks; the old stone-walls were tangled with vines and hazels and sumachs; occasionally a tall elm or pine or cedar, and chestnut in blossom, or monarch oak reared its mossy branches covered with the rich foliage; old brown houses with stone chimneys among the rocks, and antique apple-trees; old gray-headed men, with long jackets, standing in the door, tidy maids drawing water with the old mossy bucket. Altogether I have not seen anything nearly so primitive for a long time.

*July 11.* — I usually begin the day with a cold bath, which after a hot night is most invigorating; to-day have done all sorts of odd jobs. There is something pleasant in this sort of life to me, which is about all that I am fit for, as it requires no concentration of mind and thought. I often regret that I have been tempted away by any other life, but now, after tasting of the excited existence that I have, I should not be contented for a long time with this quiet.

*July 12, Sunday.* — Passed a dull day, and when will this weight be removed? All that I ask I have had, even that which I ought

not to have anticipated ; perhaps, if I had some real trouble, I might be improved, but as all I have is imaginary, where shall I begin ? There is nothing tangible.

*July 19.* — Awoke a shade lighter this morning, but thought too long in bed ; never regret an early rising ; have resolved to arise as soon as I awake hereafter, — not the first time, though, that I have resolved and broken it.

*July 21.* — Is there no hope ? As I rose this morning I saw the most brilliant rainbow, and tears came to my eyes. I remember the last time I was making preparations to leave the Eternal City, in the early morning, lying on my bed after passing a sleepless night distracted with doubt and fear, thinking of the long and weary way to my home, the mountains to climb, and wide ocean to cross, and dangers to encounter, — I remember then, as the city lay in silence save the distant bell of St. Peter's tolling woe, woe, the bright morning star glimmered above the dome of San Spirito, through my casement, and seemed like an angel eye, and gave me hope.

During the summer he took a short journey to the sea-shore with his mother and her two sisters. This trio of old ladies was very dear to him, and they were never happier than when with him, trusting to his careful driving and his tender consideration for their fears or their infirmities. He says :—

At twelve o'clock started with Aunt Mary, Aunt Emily, and mother for the sea-side in a private conveyance, starting through Glastonbury, crossing the Connecticut River at Rocky Hill, through Middletown, and are soon safely stowed at Durham. Have eaten a poor supper ; never stop here again.

*July 22, Guilford.* — The phantom has lost its grimness ; in its place dimly appears the angel of Hope.

*July 24.* — Calm and clear rises the sun this morning over the waters that sleep so calm and clear beneath, reflecting still the rock and white sail that lie motionless on its bosom. Oh that my mind might bear so light and shadow !

The sea-shore did not relieve him, and in August he went to Brattleboro' to try the water-cure, under the direction of Dr.

Robert Wesselhoeft. The change of air, the out-door life, and the moderate use of water were very beneficial to him, and, as the journal proceeds, the heavy weight was lifted from his brain, and he once says he is "as well as he ever expects to be." He entered a little into the gay life of the establishment, and found congenial friends and warm admirers among the patients. After a little while he was able to resume his drawing, though only for a few hours a day, and he made a charming portrait of the daughter of his physician, of which he thus speaks:—

*Aug. 8.* — Awoke languid and spiritless; got up three times and went to bed again for want of spunk to dress myself. Commenced a sketch of the Doctor's beautiful daughter Minna. I think she has the finest physique of any child of her age I ever saw, a noble specimen of humanity. Made a capital sketch, and felt better. On my return home, found a note from Miss P. inviting me to join her party to the circus on the island. Swallowed a hasty dinner, but reached her house too late to accompany them; rushed down to the island and found the large tent filled with about a hundred men, women, and children. The air was stifling, and it commenced raining in torrents, and, dripping through the tents, made sad work with the go-to-meeting finery of the women; white dresses were stained green from the drippings. In the midst of all fell in with Miss P. and her party making their way out. One person happening to have an umbrella sheltered us both from the deluge that poured down, but we got pretty well drenched before getting home, but enjoyed it, — it was short. I saw some very beautiful faces of women and children, which to me was the entertainment. The evening being rainy, played all sorts of games in the saloon, and had some hearty laughs; finished off by dancing the Virginia Reel. It is now eleven o'clock. I am sitting with my feet in a tub of cold water, and feel as well as ever I expect to.

He writes to his sister from Brattleboro', postmarked Feb. 26 (1847?): —

I ought to have answered your beautiful letter long ago, but this cold water makes one a real selfish being; he thinks of nothing but his



own comfort. If I stay here much longer, what little regard I might have had for others will be washed out of me, I fear, entirely.

A most surprising change has come over me since I came. It is now six weeks since I commenced the cure. If I put all the well days together for the last four years, I am sure they would not have amounted to half so many as I have passed here. Yesterday I think I never felt so well and free from all ills, at least since I can remember. I have not yet had any grand *crisis*, nothing except an intolerable itching at times of the skin; this, the Doctor says, is my disease coming out, which I am disposed to believe, for the sensation is very much like what I have felt before internally. I take a great deal of exercise, though I have not walked over fifteen miles a day yet; my legs being longer than any other patient's, I am obliged to walk alone, but still I enjoy these solitary rambles among these snow-clad hills, and unconsciously sing on my lonely way, and am happy in spite of myself,—even look with pleasure to a repetition of the same scene to-morrow. The snow is now three feet on a level, and I have not seen the smallest patch of ground since I came here. Within the last week the mercury has been as low as twenty-two degrees below zero, but this we don't mind, though sometimes I am disposed to shiver a little when Stoltz, my man, comes into my room at four o'clock in the morning, with his lantern and cold wet sheet on his arm, and bids me jump out and be wrapped in; but the shock is soon over, and is succeeded by an agreeable warmth and soothing effect, and one falls into a most soft and delicious slumber. In this state I once dreamed of visiting the tomb of Priessnitz, which seemed to be in a sort of chapel in an old church; in the centre of this stood the sarcophagus, in the shape of a bathing-tub, over which were thrown picturesquely sundry sheets and blankets; the inscription I dreamed to have read, but what it was I could not recall. At another time I dreamed of walking ghost-like down Washington Street, in Boston, wrapped in my wet sheet and being stared at and annoyed by the shopkeepers as I passed along. I made a short cut down a narrow street, and jumped on a sled which a boy had abandoned in his flight. I coasted over hill and down valley with the speed of lightning, and soon found myself at my own door. Met the Doctor, who advised me not to walk again till I came out of the sheet, for fear of taking cold. I went immediately to my room to dress, after which went out with the intention of returning the boy his

sled, when, lo! it was transformed into a sitz-bathing tub, filled with cold water! This shock awoke me, and it is the last dream I have had of the water-cure.

After lying two or three hours in the sheet, I am taken out, rubbed by Stoltz and Fritz a few minutes, in a bath of from sixty to seventy degrees. I have never taken an entire cold bath yet; leaving the bath, I am enveloped in a coarse dry cotton sheet, and rubbed dry. By the way, I think you would like this way, after taking your bath; it is much better than a towel; it prevents evaporation, and you become immediately warm in it. After dressing I go out immediately, rain or shine, and walk three or four miles, drinking as much water as I can at every spring I pass; our breakfast after this, of bread and milk, is most delicious; the only trouble is to restrain the appetite within reasonable bounds. Soon after breakfast I take a long walk, returning between eleven and twelve o'clock, and sitting coolly down in a tub of water for half an hour or so; the same bath again at five o'clock. This sitz-bath has a wonderful effect on me; I always get out of it singing or whistling, and never think of doing less than running two miles to begin with. We dine at one o'clock, — a plain dinner of soup, a roast with two or three kinds of vegetables, and finish with a simple rice or tapioca pudding with stewed prunes; our wine is colorless. No one would for a moment suppose that invalids were dining at our table; cold water has a wonderful effect on the appetite, and very little inconvenience is ever felt by the patients from their food. About thirty of us meet at dinner, — old men and women, girls and boys, a motley group. The Doctor presides at one table, and *I* at the other. I have become quite an adept at carving. So we go on in what seems a monotonous round, one day after another, but still are happy; why should we not be, when we feel that the blessed boon of health is returning?

#### SUNDAY MORNING.

I wish you were here to-day, — such a pure blue sky, such clear living air, fit for angels to breathe. No house made with hands shall shut out this glorious God's temple, that shall be my worshipping place to-day; my dome shall be the blue vault of heaven, o'erarching all; my marble pavement, the pure white snow; my aisles among its carved crusted drifts, over which I glide as on a frozen sea; my altar, the high mountains, its incense the rising mists, my burning lamp the

Sun ; the ever living running water shall serve for my sacrament. The winds in the ever-green branches of the tall old pines shall chant my anthem, my prayer : " O God, what can words express ? I bow my head ; mine eyes are filled with tears."

On November 18, 1846, his three old friends and travelling companions, Huntington, Gray, and H. K. Brown, sent him a joint letter of most cordial invitation to join them in New York, offering him every inducement of pleasant lodgings, studio, and companionship ; but he did not accept their invitation, but went to Boston, where he had engagements.

During the spring and summer of 1847 he was either in New York or Boston, drawing crayon portraits, or at South Manchester, resting and enjoying the society of his relatives.

He took a large studio in Boston, which was formerly the vestry of Dr. Channing's church. John occupied a room above. Part of the time they slept in the upper rooms, taking their meals at the United States Hotel.

About this time he gave a few lessons, the only time that he ever attempted regular teaching. One of his pupils says : —

" My first remembrance of Mr. Cheney was at the time when he was taking the likeness of Mrs. Ticknor, when a few young ladies joined to take some lessons from him. I do not think he gave us more than six lessons when we separated for the summer, but he gave us an impulse to work, and an interest in drawing which his modesty made it impossible for him to appreciate. His sincere belief that he knew too little of the technicalities of his art to teach made him undervalue the help he gave ; but his genius could kindle the latent spark, without which any help is valueless."

In September, 1847, he joined Miss Pitkin, who, with her father, was visiting some friends in Rochester, New York, and they decided to be married there and go on a wedding journey to Niagara. He was glad to escape wedding preparations and festivities which did not suit his sensitive nature. The first

winter after their marriage they spent with his sister, Mrs. Goodman, at Astoria, near New York City. He made portraits in New York, and enjoyed the society of his artist friends there.

In the summer of 1848, Seth spent some time at Nahant, with his friend Miss Anna C. Lowell, for whom he made several drawings. A few extracts from her journal will show the impression which he made on others at that time.

Cheney arrived at dusk. . . . Mrs. Henry Ware told me that he had promised Cornelia [Mrs. Goddard, afterwards Mrs. Charles G. Loring] to come down to Nahant to take George's picture, and I sent him an invitation to stay with us. He is so agreeable, and, better than that, interesting, on account of his transparency, sincerity, and sweetness, that it is a pleasure to have this opportunity of seeing him freely. . . .

*Aug. 9.* — He seemed to enjoy the scenery of the beaches, Swampscott, etc. He talked very pleasantly of his travels in Europe, and again in the evening about the celebrated masters in painting, their various styles, etc., all with perfect naturalness and simplicity. At half past eight he took a moonlight walk and retired early. He seems to me far from well, is thin and haggard, though his eyes are bright and spiritual in their expression.

He alludes frequently to his tendency to depression, speaks of the ocean, especially on board ship, inspiring him with melancholy ; of Paris being too exciting for his mind, and Rome too desolate. He loved Florence, because it is so quiet and peaceful and home-like ; prefers the country and especially mountain scenery.

*Aug. 10.* — Much of the day was occupied with Mr. Cheney. . . . I found his ideas very liberal and enlarged and yet serious. He speaks so frankly and without a shadow of dogmatism or reserve or affectation, that it is refreshing to converse with him.

This afternoon he accompanied us again in our drive. We were able to drive on the beach close to the water, and he was charmed with this, and drew my attention to every change of aspect in cloud, sky, or water ; pointed out every bird and every picturesque object.

*Aug. 11.* — I found him a strong advocate for total abstinence, but all in his own calm, candid, suggestive way.\*

Miss Lowell then relates, at some length, conversations which she held with him, speaking enthusiastically of Mrs. Goddard, Mrs. Ware, and her father, and adds a very characteristic passage in regard to Mr. Lowell's kindness to an old domestic.

Mr. Cheney's eyes glowed with that radiant look they have when he is speaking of something good or beautiful.

"How delightful it is to hear of such instances!" said he; "how much happiness may be communicated by a single word or trifling act of kindness, forgotten perhaps by the giver, but never forgotten by the receiver! The memory of your father, what a source of enjoyment it must be to that poor lone woman! and that years after he is gone."

"And his kindness to her returning as a blessing to his children," said I, "for it is a great delight to us to hear him thus spoken of."

"Yes, it must be so; no good word or deed is ever lost; it is perpetually living and producing fruit," said he with emotion.

After tea we took a drive by moonlight. The night was clear and soft, the sky without clouds except a low ridge towards the east, through which the heat-lightning played. The twilight had scarcely faded towards the west, while the full moon shone resplendently and left its broad golden track on the ocean. Cheney was enchanted with the beauty and the novelty of the scene, and we enjoyed it doubly by witnessing his pleasure, and having him point out every picturesque object, and every effect of light and shade and form and hue, with a painter's insight and a poet's taste, and his own spiritual expression gleaming out from his deep, earnest eyes; now serious, now radiant with pleasure, just discerned in the silvery pale light, which seemed well suited for it, enhanced by, and in harmony with the spiritual beauty of the scene. He made us observe several peculiar and beautiful effects produced by the moonlight in contrast with the ocean or rocks; for instance, above dark Egg Rock there was a line of light, but above the broad golden reflection of the moonbeams on the water,

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\* He was not always an advocate for total abstinence, but at times thought the use of good light wines would be rather a preventive of drunkenness. But he was so sympathetic in conversation that people often fancied he advocated doctrines he only did not dissent from.

seemed to rise up a dark pyramid mysteriously looming up from the horizon. Around the point of little Nahant, too, gleamed a brilliant light concentrating in one bright pencil of silvery rays at the extreme point.

*Aug. 17.* — This morning he got so discouraged about Georgie's picture and Cornelia's too, that he said he believed the best way would be to roll them up, and let them remain for several months, and perhaps he could make something of them then ; now he had got to a standpoint and did not feel as if he gained ground. We begged him not to do this, and encouraged him as much as we could. Georgie's is a lovely picture, and looks like him, though a little older-looking and perhaps defective in a few particulars.

He said, "Well then ! he would go on and try what he could do." Accordingly, he worked hard upon Georgie's all day, often for several hours together in his own room, and he did improve it wonderfully and felt in much better spirits. He then said that last evening he had felt utterly discouraged ; that it always was so ; he had never drawn a picture, that he did not feel at the time that it should be the last, that he would go back to the plough.

He spoke of "Comus" as more beautiful to him than even "Paradise Lost."

Glancing round the point of land, as we were looking out intently at it, he said, "There ! this is our *last* look at that ; we shall never see just this again. Does it not often strike you when you are seeing a beautiful but passing scene in nature, or, indeed, enjoying anything, this thought, that it can never return ? There may be other aspects or pleasures, but not this one again ; it is the last time."

All things pleasant come to an end, and we found ourselves soon after in our little, plain, prosaic parlor.

"This has been delightful, indeed," said Mr. Cheney, "something rescued from Chaos."

*Aug. 22.* — Miss —— called. She admires Cheney with her usual extravagance. "The truth is," she said, "Cheney is not a man, he is an angel." She said he was the most impersonal being she ever saw ; not but that he takes great interest himself in persons, for he is remarkable for doing so, but he has not a particle of egotism, and speaks of himself, his family affairs or personal feelings, as little as possible.

During the years 1848 and 1849 he once more engaged in engraving. His friend, Mr. Stephen Perkins, published a volume of outlines from Allston, for which the brothers, Seth and John, made the engravings. The preface sufficiently explains the work:—

“The outlines and sketches contained in this volume are a part of those found in Mr. Allston’s studio in Cambridge, Mass., after his death in July, 1843. They consist in great part of compositions hastily sketched in chalk, and never carried further; among them, however, are a few outlines in umber, on canvas, which, although more carefully done, should not be considered as finished outlines, since they were intended merely as a ground on which to paint. The sizes of the figures in the different compositions vary from that of life to a few inches in length, and where it was necessary to reduce them for engraving, the daguerreotype was used, by which the image was conveyed to the engraver’s plates, prepared for that purpose, and there fixed by tracing the line through the silver.

“BOSTON, Jan. 1, 1850.”

The greater part of Allston’s works here represented are now the property of the Boston Art Museum, but the book also contains reproductions of outline tracings of the great picture of “Jacob’s Dream,” which is in England; of “Uriel,” and of “Michael setting the Watch,” a composition of Allston’s, afterwards destroyed.

Some experiments were made in novel styles of engraving, to represent the technical peculiarities of the originals. The work was done by the brothers so much together that it is difficult to distinguish what belonged to either. Most of it is engraved with a dry point. The “Prometheus” and “Prodigal Son” were engraved on stone by John, and Seth engraved the “Heliodorus,” and some others entirely. The darkening of one line to give strength to the outline may be regarded as a mistake, but as a whole the engraving is very delicate and spirited, and the work gives a truer idea of the subtle and spiritual genius of Allston

than anything accessible to the general public. But although much valued by lovers of art, the book did not find a ready sale, and brought no pecuniary remuneration to the publisher, and little to the engravers. It is now very scarce, the plates having been destroyed in the great Boston fire, so that it cannot be reproduced.

Mr. Allston had drawn some of the sketches with a double line, and the artists, with their friendly critics, Mr. Perkins and Mr. Franklin Dexter, were anxiously considering how to render them, — which line should be reproduced. “I shall give both,” said Seth, “I will never take it upon me to leave out anything of Allston’s.”

The birth of a child in 1848 failed to bring the long-anticipated happiness, since the little creature died in a few hours. Mrs. Cheney’s health failed, and she sought renovation at the Brattleboro’ Water Cure, where Mr. Cheney joined her in the intervals of relaxation from work.

In August and September he made a journey with his brother Frank to Portland and Bangor, by steamer, to Sebago Lake and the White Mountains, and thence to Burlington, to see his friend Hills, and by Lake George and across Vermont to his home.

FRIDAY (postmarked Sept. 11).

DEAR JOHN, — I went with Frank, after his return from the West, to Boston and to Nahant, and finished my drawings, and then took passage for Bangor on the Penobscot, and then across to the Kennebec, and down to Portland; and as Frank did not seem to feel like returning yet, and was gaining so much in health and spirits, concluded to go to the White Mountains; only we regretted you were not with us, as we had talked so long about going there together, and about a thousand times on the way wished you were with us. We had a good time and enjoyed all. I think I never enjoyed a journey more in any country. The mountains altogether surpassed my expectations in grandeur and extent. I would go a long way farther to see them again than to Niagara, and would say to any one who could see but



one of them, to go by all means to the mountains. We came across to Lakes Champlain and George, beautiful as any Lake Maggiore or Como, to say the least. I mean to go next year and spend half the summer there, and make sketches on the lakes and mountains; find the picturesque everywhere. We arrived at Albany on Wednesday. Frank had business in Paterson and New York, so I came home by the railroad to Springfield. Emily will go to Brattleboro' next week; the Doctor thinks it will take three months to effect a cure. She will probably be all winter in the cure; it will be best to make a thorough business of it. I shall go to Boston immediately from Brattleboro' to draw the portrait of a sick lady, that I have solemnly promised to do by the middle of September. I shall very likely be in Boston a couple of months; shall you be there sooner, or shall you be at home? At all events, don't stay in Philadelphia.

The following year was saddened by his youngest brother Frank's absence in California, whence he returned very ill with fever. Seth was summoned to him at Manchester, and happily found him recovering.

His wife returned to Manchester very ill, and the symptoms indicated consumption, a disease of which several of her family had died. The following extract from a letter of Mrs. Harriet B. Cheney to her son gives a picture of Emily's sick-room: —

MANCHESTER, Mar. 15, 1850.

Your Aunt Emily continues to linger on the borders of the grave; she suffers very little, and is cheerful and resigned. Your Uncle Seth is devoted to her, and her room is filled with everything beautiful to the eye, pictures, and flowers, and mosses. He has made a chair for her which is almost as comfortable as a spring-bed, and he draws her about in it.

Seth made a picture of her looking upward in prayer, which, in its expression of holy religious rapture, is unsurpassed by that of any saint ever painted by a Catholic artist. She died May 11, 1850.

In the autumn of 1850 Mr. Cheney had a very severe illness.

He had been drawing at Newport that summer. Sea-shore life and air always had an unfavorable effect upon his health and spirits. He had also been imprudent in bathing in the hot sun. He started to go to Manchester, but stopped for the night at Stonington, feeling very unwell. He thought he should die, and that no one would know where he was. He asked the landlord for pen and paper, but there was none in the house; he went out and bought it, and wrote to his sister, not saying that he was ill, but only indicating where he was. The next morning, feeling very ill, he started for Manchester. A camp-meeting on the route attracted many visitors, some of whom were singing their Methodist hymns in the cars, while others, mocking them with ribald songs, made the cars so noisy that, to his aching sensitive brain, it seemed like Pandemonium. He reached home at last, fevered, sick. He wandered from room to room, seeking rest and finding none, until, at last, too weak to move, he lay down in the south room to endure the struggle between life and death. His disease amounted to a high nervous or brain fever, and his state was very critical. A homœopathic physician from Hartford, Dr. Schue, attended him, and his brother John watched over him. A cough ensued, but the physician said his lungs were stronger than his head, and he could bear it. After the fever abated, he recovered steadily, though he was long weak. How he enjoyed the delicious pears and peaches, and how he mourned for the golden autumn days which passed while he could not go out! Autumn was his favorite season. His health was then better than usual, and he loved its rich mellow beauty. Ward took him to ride one day, but although he enjoyed it, it exhausted him.

During this sickness he felt a strong desire for life; he could not resign it. Six years later, when he lay in that room struggling between life and death, he was calm and peaceful.

When sufficiently recovered he went to Brooklyn, N. Y., and

spent the winter with Henry K. Brown, working in his studio. He modelled a head of his brother John, and several copies of the antique, among them the "Boy and Goose." He studied anatomy, making drawings of the muscles in a little pocket sketch-book, which he was accustomed to carry in his pocket, that he might study it when crossing the ferry. He had at some time attended a course of dissections.

He made great improvement in the stronger modelling of his heads. There is an exquisite feeling in his earlier works which could not be surpassed, but his later drawings have a more assured, thorough truthfulness of expression, and he never rose higher than in some of his latest pictures.

His matured thought did not destroy, but deepened his early enthusiasm. He once said, "It troubles me that beautiful Nature does not give me the same delight and excitement it used to." But he never lost a full, calm, and sober joy in Nature to the last days of his life.

COPY OF A LETTER OF T. R. GOULD TO MOTHER CHENEY.

BOSTON, Nov. 11, 1850.

DEAR MADAM, — A change of hour, made two days before in the starting of the train, threatened to keep me in Hartford till three o'clock on Friday afternoon, and allow a very short time in Manchester. So I hired a vehicle and was driven out directly to the old home. There it lay, on the slope, as usual, smoking contentedly.

Seth opened the door, and drew me in with eyes of wonder; at first he thought it must be a dream, but concluded that I came down in the hail-storm that was then falling. He seemed well and in good spirits, was troubled with a great appetite at dinner, said his head felt clear. He was very beautiful, — in my eyes, he always was, — and now with his complete beard and high head, looked like Shakespeare. Perhaps the low ceiling of the old house aided this fancy, resembling mayhap the poet's at Stratford. Frank was in fine condition. Rush's little daughter made her first successful effort in walking alone, to the great glee of the child and joy of the parents.

I missed Emily never so much as there, — that pure and joyous spirit that has gone up before. I suppose we all thought of her, but no one spoke. Seth sat in the easy-chair, and we talked three hours away very swiftly. I asked him your Christian name carelessly, — he little knew for what purpose.

Tell Electa, the younger, “the one fair daughter, and no more, the which you love passing well,” with my friendliest remembrance, that I not only did not urge Seth to come to Boston this winter, but advised him not to come; this went *with my head*, but *against my heart*, and yet deeply with my heart. I hope to see you all in January.

So you have heard Jenny Lind, and perhaps the finest music that floats anywhere in *this* world’s atmosphere. She is a good girl. How much personal character adds to all pleasures of art!

I am, with respect and affection, always

Yours,            THOMAS R. GOULD.

This brief note to Mr. Cheney tells its own story:—

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN,  
NEW YORK, May 11, 1848.

SIR, — I take the liberty to inform you that at a meeting of the Academy on Wednesday, the 10th inst. you were elected an *Associate*. On application the Curator will furnish you a copy of the Constitution, By-Laws, etc.

Very respectfully,

F. W. EDMONDS,  
*Recording Secretary.*

His friend, Henry Peters Gray, painted a portrait of him for the Academy. It has much of his sweetness and beauty, but a little too much of the fine gentleman to be quite characteristic.

## CHAPTER VII.

## HOME LIFE.

IN the summer of 1851, Mr. Cheney planned a trip to the White Mountains with his brother John, and his sister, Mrs. Goodman. It was arranged that they should meet at Brattleboro', whither he went, and lodged at the Vermont House. Owing to the illness of one of the party, they failed to meet him, and he waited there a few days alone. Here our acquaintance commenced. He took his seat beside me at table, and described to me the walk he had taken over the hills, and the beautiful effect of the sound of church bells re-echoed from the mountains around. A walk was arranged by my friends for the evening, and we said, "Ought we to ask Mr. Cheney to go, or should he offer to accompany us?" "He will never offer to go, he is so diffident," said the lady who knew him best; but he accepted the invitation with that peculiar lighting up of the countenance which was so radiant and expressive.

On Monday morning I left Brattleboro' for a visit to my aunt, at the little mountain town of Dublin, near the grand Monadnock. Mr. John L. Russell, the botanist, and one or two other gentlemen had proposed to come to Dublin to make an ascent of this mountain. They came to the station to take leave of me, and were talking of it, so that I said to Mr. Cheney, "As you are disappointed of your trip to the White Mountains, will you not join the party to Monadnock?"

He went to Dublin on Wednesday alone, and, thinking it too late in the evening to call, sat on the steps of the old church,

enjoying the beauty of the moonlight on the mountains around. On Thursday he came to Dr. Leonard's, and we went to ride together, and arranged to go with a party of relatives to Monadnock on Friday. It was found impossible to procure more than one horse, and we were therefore obliged to walk a great part even of the level distance, and the ascent was steep and fatiguing to one unused to climbing, especially as the weather was very warm.

As we neared the summit I spoke of an ascent of Mt. Washington, and of my feeling at finding, far above other vegetation, amid storm and mist, a tiny white flower which seemed like a baby's smile. At that moment I looked down, and there it was. Mr. Cheney drew back as if from a shrine, and said, with the most reverent tone, "Why, I had almost trodden on it." He was so fatigued that he did not come to the house until Sunday, when he came and spent the day, and went to church. Dr. Leonard, the pastor, was a man of the purest religious nature. His quiet preaching, the beauty of nature as seen from the windows of the church, and the harmonious feeling of the congregation, made the whole service so peaceful that Seth enjoyed it more than any religious rite I ever attended with him. At evening we climbed Beach Hill for the sunset view.

Monday morning, he appeared with a horse and vehicle which almost defies description, — an old yellow chaise much the worse for wear, and a horse whose angular outline and peculiar gait told the history of years of hard service on the mountains. For a week we rode daily in this vehicle, often stopping in the woods and tying the horse to a tree while we gathered flowers, or with a long pole fished lilies from the ponds. These excursions filled the country people with wonder and amusement. At this time Mr. Cheney wore his beard long, which was very uncommon in New England, and a straw hat with a broad brim, and a black ribbon around it; and, moreover, had the habit of

using a small dark mirror to observe the lights and shadows of the landscape more perfectly. They said, "He certainly was not proud or he would not ride in that old yellow chaise." He joined good-naturedly in the merriment of the young members of the household, and one day brought up a drawing he had made of the equipage. We laughed till we were hoarse at the amusing caricature. Many years after, his brother Ward saw this drawing for the first time, and the tears came to his eyes at the likeness to his brother's form and action. I know of no other comic picture from his hand.

In the autumn and winter he still occupied Dr. Gannett's vestry. The principal room was very large and high, with one great window, the lower part of which he boarded up to get a high light only. Here he had his casts, a few books, and a grand piano, and in spite of the coldness and dreariness of the apartment he enjoyed the space and freedom it afforded him. The boys of the neighborhood climbed up, and peeped in at the window, and seeing the white statues in the dim light, spread the rumor that it was haunted; and the little mice came fearlessly out from their holes to eat the crumbs of bread which dropped from his hand as he erased his drawing. He and John occupied rooms above as sleeping-rooms, taking their meals at the United States Hotel. His friend, Kimberley, often played and sang to him here, and his artist friends sometimes worked or talked with him.

He had constant commissions, and drew thirty portraits during the winter. Among them is one of Dr. James Walker, and two very beautiful pictures of children, the daughters of his friends, Mr. Ingersoll Bowditch and Mr. Stephen Perkins. He vacillated a little at this time between sculpture and painting, and made the admirable bas-relief portrait of Mr. A. Bronson Alcott. His health was not good, and he suffered especially from trouble in the throat. He made the acquaintance of my

friend, M—— S——, and took the greatest delight in her rare spiritual powers and natural love of art. He carried her flowers, pictures, books, and tried to help her to give outward form to the pictures of her fancy. He speaks of her "as that wonderful being who seems hardly to belong to this earth, but a spirit from another and a higher sphere." He adds: "To see this beautiful child confined to this narrow room, and often racked with torturing cramps and spasms, still seeming so glad and happy, made me condemn myself, who could walk freely under the sun, and had hands to do, for ever murmuring at anything."

He was much exhausted by the labor and excitement of the winter, and went early in the summer to his mother's home in Manchester, where he spent several weeks very quietly. In August he bought a horse, and went on horseback to Berkshire County. He visited Miss Catherine Sedgwick, and made a drawing of her. He found the horseback exercise too violent, so that he was quite ill, and he procured a light open wagon in which he came to Dublin with his friends Mr. and Mrs. Henry K. Brown.

I was again visiting at Dr. Leonard's, and our engagement took place here, and was followed by quiet, happy weeks spent in riding and walking among the beautiful scenery of that region. We left Dublin on a frosty morning in September, with my sister Helen, in the little wagon, and, stopping first at Peterboro' to take leave of our dear friend, Ariana S. Walker, we rode all day to Harvard in Worcester County. It was one of those perfect days of which there are not many in any life. We took turns in walking up the hills in the crisp autumn air, and gloried in the ripening beauty of the forests, and so travelled forty miles without fatigue either to the horse or ourselves. We spent the night at the picturesque home of my quaint old friend, Henry B. Pearson, who had once been so charmed by my telling him that Mr. Cheney changed the position of the stones in a brook



to improve the music, that he begged me to invite him to his house. The old house stood amid large, open fields, with long avenues of elms leading from the doors, and with distant views of the Bolton hills and the lake. "And they put the pilgrim to sleep in a large upper room whose windows looked towards the sunrising, and the name of that chamber was 'Peace.'" Mr. Cheney always referred to that as a blessed night, when he lay down and slept until morning as he had not done since childhood. When he was once afterward unable to meet me at that house, he wrote me to be sure to sleep in that room.

He did not draw as many portraits this winter as in the year before. He was rather anxious to make a change in his style, and he gave much time to study. Color attracted him very strongly, and he had already made some essays in painting; but the great demand for his crayon portraits had prevented him from giving sufficient attention to it, to overcome perfectly the mechanical difficulties of manipulation. We studied anatomy together by taking certain parts of the body for a model, which he would mould in clay and I would draw on a slate, while we also studied the names, attachments, and use of the muscles. He made an excellent copy of the "Fighting Gladiator" as a study, and began a bust of my sister Helen, which rivals the antique head of Antinoüs in purity of line and beauty of feature. Mr. Billings felt that he might become a great sculptor, and urged him to that work. He had a slight defect of color-blindness, which made him distrustful of his sight in color; but I do not think it affected either his feeling or expression. The winter was rich in work and in social enjoyment. In March we took a trip to Dublin to see the glory of the mountains in winter, but the visit was saddened by the severe illness of one of my cousins. In spite of it, however, he enjoyed the quiet and the beauties of the frost and snow, and made a drawing of Ednah Dow Smith, a girl of eleven years old, which is one of his most

charming works. Her sister's illness gave a touch of pensiveness to a character naturally bright and sunny, and the picture is as remarkable for perfect delineation of character as for masterly breadth and simplicity of light and shadow, and thorough drawing. The likeness is still recognized in her and in her children.

We were married, May 19, 1853, by Theodore Parker. We spent a few weeks in travelling, visiting Trenton Falls and Philadelphia, spending a few days with his sister at Ravenswood, N. Y., and then going to South Manchester for the summer. He made a portrait of his brother Ward's wife here, and began one of myself, which was never finished to his satisfaction. In August we took a trip to the White Mountains, spent a night on Mt. Washington, a week at North Conway, and returned to Boston by Portland and Gloucester.

In September we went to housekeeping at No. 80 Pinckney St., and for the first time in his life he was master of a home. He said, "Let us furnish the house for ourselves and not for other people. There are plenty of fine parlors in Beacon Street for people to look at. Let ours be comfortable and fitted to us." So of the north front parlor we made a studio, in which we put the old grand piano, a large easel, a few chairs, and some casts and engravings, while the sunny back room was made cosy and pleasant for daily use. On Sunday evening Mr. Kimberley would wander off into the studio, and play and sing in his own simple and heartfelt style some of the grandest themes of modern composers. Brother John and Ednah Smith were with us through the winter. As Ednah followed into the room to hear Kimberley play, he suddenly caught sight of her face, which he had not remarked before, and exclaimed, "A likeness!" as he recognized the original of the picture drawn at Dublin.

Seth's mother died October 12, 1853, at the age of seventy-three. He was with her for some weeks during her illness, and at

the time of her death. When I joined him, I found him very calm and brave while he could help others, but when we were alone he wept almost like a child, and so relieved the tension of his nerves. He felt that he could have asked nothing more for his mother than this happy departure with her children all about her, yet the separation sank deeply into his heart. She was a true New England woman. Her sons wished themselves to bear to the grave the body of the mother who bore them, but in deference to the feelings of the old neighbors among whom she had lived in friendship so long, they invited them to act as bearers. But her seven living sons and her daughter's husband, eight active handsome men, walked together under the old maple-trees, planted by her husband's hand, which were so full of the golden yellow of their ripeness that we did not miss the sunshine, though a few drops of rain fell as they laid her in her last resting-place. When I went into "mother's bedroom," where the whole family had loved to gather around her, I found Seth and John lighting a fire there. "I could not bear to see it look neglected and desolate," said Seth. "Let us keep all that remains!"

Soon after this, my friend, Miss Walker, came to us so ill that she was brought on a couch, and of course all our arrangements had to conform to her comfort. Seth welcomed her warmly, brought her some little pleasure every day, and said, "It seems to sanctify our home to receive and bless one so suffering." She left us to go to her brother's at Springfield, and we went to Manchester for Thanksgiving. The shadow of the recent loss was over the old house, but all felt that the family festival must be kept up with spirit, and the brothers had a frolic at which the little nephews and nieces looked on amazed. Seth was very fond of fun and wit and laughter, yet he more often enjoyed it in others than gave vent to it himself, but under the inspiration of Kimberley's music he and his brothers joined in an extemporaneous concert not of the classic order.

In March he had a severe attack of trouble in the throat, and went to his sister's in Ravenswood, for a few weeks of change and rest. While there scarlet fever broke out in the family, and slightly affected him, so that he was not well, and accomplished but little work through the spring months. The prosperous condition of business decided us to fulfil a cherished plan of going to Europe. He desired greatly to break up the routine of crayon drawing, and make a special study of color, which he found it difficult to do amid the many demands for work at home. He did not believe that an artist should live in Europe.

The last week in the home was one whose history belongs to that of the country, but which brought terrible mental struggles into every heart and home. Anthony Burns was arrested as a fugitive slave, was tried before Commissioner Loring, and finally returned to his master.

There was no lukewarmness in Seth's feeling about slavery. He was thoroughly and heartily an abolitionist, and always gave his sympathy and support to that cause. The whole city was full of excitement. It was a test case, because there was sufficient legal ground to clear the prisoner, if the heart of his judges was so inclined. Theodore Parker said, "I tell you he will not be carried away." Wendell Phillips believed "Loring wished to save him and he could." Rich men stood ready to buy him. As it became evident that he would not be legally freed, men said "he *must* not be taken away from Boston," and former lovers of peace counselled actual violence to prevent it.

Seth was agitated to the very depths of his soul. He could not give his mind either to his art, or to the necessary measures for breaking up our household. He haunted the scene of the trial, and felt his blood boiling for action, though no action was possible but direct violence in conflict with legal force. It brought up in his mind the greatest questions of conscience and duty, and the providence of God, which suffers the wickedness

of men to prevail so long. One night we talked together far past the midnight. But as we talked, clearer and brighter became the faith in God and his providence. We grew to see that no wrong, no violence could help forward the truth, that there must be no cowardice, and no fear of results, but that he alone who stood firm in the great truths of love and trust in God could always stand. His soul became calm and still. He said, "Perhaps I shall not be able to maintain this height; to-morrow amid the strife my blood will be boiling again, but at least we have seen what is the highest."

We had left our home and gone to my mother's, when the final hour came, and Burns was carried through the streets escorted by a guard of armed men, put on board a ship, and carried South. Such a gloomy day was never seen in Boston. Many shops were closed or draped in mourning. Even the anniversary meetings were deserted; it seemed as if the people were called up from all New England to witness this great wrong. People went gloomily about the streets, as if they had just laid their dear ones in the grave. The colored people, especially the women, sat upon the steps of the court-house overwhelmed with misery. The blow struck at our consciences broke their hearts. It was impossible for Seth to sit at home that evening. We went to Kimberley's to see if music would calm him, but he could not sing; we must talk, and try to bring peace and righteousness to light out of this chaos.

The effect on Seth's health was serious. He was restless and anxious until his departure for Europe. A few weeks were spent partly in Boston in finishing some drawings, and making other arrangements for the journey, and partly in visiting the old home and family at Manchester.

This was the last year in which he took any commissions for portraits, and the last picture which he entirely finished was a beautiful drawing of a young son of Mr. J. H. Wolcott. He

preferred it to anything he had done that year. The child had that delicate spiritual beauty which often belongs to those who have mothers in heaven.

During the winter Seth had a constant demand for portraits. He would often say to a person anxious to engage him, "I cannot do it now, but I will in a month;" and sometimes punctual to the time the sitter appeared, and he felt obliged to fulfil a promise which he had considered very vague. His frequent illnesses made him often despondent; and, especially after working too long upon a picture, he would despair of his success, and perhaps destroy it. If he could be persuaded to lay it aside and resume it after an interval of rest, he would sometimes finish it with satisfaction. He was always self-distrustful, and the criticism of one whose opinion he respected would sway him too much. He drew this winter the portrait of Mrs. Theodore Parker, and succeeded fully in rendering the lovely purity of her character. He said, when drawing her, he "felt as if he had been with the angels." He was also urged to draw Mr. Parker's portrait with a view to having an engraving from it. He felt diffident about undertaking it from the great force of character and variety of expression in the sitter's face. As Mr. Parker was apt to fall into a brown study, I attended the sittings to keep him in conversation, and watched the progress of the portrait. I felt that he had succeeded in giving the sweetest and tenderest side of his nature, but Mr. Parker, on seeing it, thought it lacked strength. Mr. Cheney went again to work upon it, with this idea in his mind, and the result was not wholly satisfactory. There is a want of unity in the picture, and while some of those who knew Mr. Parker best prefer it to any other portrait, others do not recognize its truth.

It is a life-long regret that Mr. Cheney did not draw Mr. Emerson, as the latter desired him to do. An engagement was made for the first sitting, when Mrs. Emerson suggested that

it would be better for Mr. Cheney to come to Concord in mild weather, and draw Mr. Emerson at home. The plan seemed an admirable one, but alas! amid the pressure of engagements and the constant drawbacks of ill-health, the time never came when the artist felt able to undertake a work which he knew required his very best powers.

Seth took a warm interest in the School of Design for Women, which was in operation at this time, and readily received the visits of its pupils, and gave them advice and encouragement. One of the most accomplished pupils, who was appointed an assistant teacher, was Miss Jane M. Clark, and he invited her to come to the house and draw from casts under his direction. Miss Clark was a young girl from New Hampshire, who had been working in Boston for a few years. Her friends were among the most distinguished anti-slavery families, who were charmed with her character and her talent, and had employed her to make portraits of Mr. Garrison, Mr. Phillips, and other noted men of that circle. She was as lovely in person as she was true and modest in character, and she was so conscious of her artistic deficiency that she said there were houses in Boston she could not enter, because these early portraits were a perpetual reproach to her. Mr. Cheney admired her character, and appreciated her talent very highly, and gladly gave her all the instruction she wished.

He never professed to be a teacher, but he had marvellous power, and he gave her new insight into the principles of drawing, and a confidence in her work which she never had before. He stimulated and encouraged his pupils without flattering them. They felt willing to devote themselves to the dryest and severest lessons, and they became idealized in his presence. He sought first what was good in their work, then gently and faithfully told them what was wrong, and helped them to correct it. Miss Clark made rapid progress under such instruction. When

she attended the atelier of Henri Scheffer at Paris, she told him that she wished to begin at the beginning, and when he saw her drawing he exclaimed in amazement, "Why, you know how to draw!"

A short extract from Miss Clark's journal will give a picture of his home at this time, and show how she appreciated the privileges enjoyed there.

EXTRACT FROM JEANIE CLARK'S JOURNAL.

*May 30, 1854.* — I have been for the last time to Mr. Cheney's to draw. They were both out, so I wandered through the pleasant rooms, and took last looks, and said good-by to all the precious familiar things.

The dear picture\* of the infant Jesus, with its mysteriously deep and beautiful eyes, looked at me dreamily, sorrowfully, and yet with a great fulness of light and serene faith that helped me to go forth again into the world, surer of another world, surer of the deep significance and use of this. The sweet Rosa† looked down with her innocent wondering face, as if she half knew the meaning of my lingering feet, baby though she was. The Roman Girl, with her veiled head and dignified carriage, looked not at me; and Neddy, with her half-thoughtful, half-coquettish face, cared not that I went. The other pictures and casts and even the furniture said a kindly "good-by," and I left them all forever with a great sorrowful gladness in my heart that it had been my privilege to love them all so well as to shrink thus at the parting. It has been a rare and blessed privilege to me, a something for my whole life.

When we planned to go to Europe we felt very strongly the advantage a year's study in Paris would be to Miss Clark, and decided to ask her to accompany us, if money could be raised to pay her expenses. Seth was very much interested in the plan, and easily procured the requisite amount from his and her

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\* The copy of the Dresden Madonna, by Retzsch, belonging to Mr. Stephen Perkins, then loaned to John Cheney.

† Rosalie Goodman.



friends. I had the great pleasure of telling her of this prospect, and shall never forget her look of surprised, almost alarmed delight. She had felt the greatest longing, and almost a right, to go with us, but had believed it impossible, as she had no means of her own.

One delightful occasion deserves to be put on record. Mr. F. B. Sanborn invited us to meet a small company at the rooms of Mr. Moncure D. Conway in Harvard University, to hear a paper from Mr. Emerson on poetry. Mr. Morton had just received a box of the true Plymouth May-flower, which he distributed among us, and whose fragrance filled the room. After the reading Mr. Otto Dresel played upon the piano, improvising or playing from memory, in his own poetic and expressive style, which Mr. Cheney preferred to that of any other musician. We walked home over the bridge, by the glow of the sunset light, in the fresh beauty of spring, and Seth said, "What do we go to Europe for? We shall find nothing better than this."

This scrap of letter gives a vivid picture of his simple home feeling:—

TO MRS. CHENEY AT EXETER, N. H.

AT STUDIO, Friday morning, Sept., 1853.

DEAR EDNAH,—The postman brought your note this morning, while I was washing the dishes. I am very glad you found Anna revived. I feared you would be too late.

Who do you think I had to dinner yesterday? Just as I was cooking the chops for John and myself the bell rang, and on going to the door I found Ward; of course I invited him to dine. Fortunately I had just three chops; was not that providential? Ward pronounced them the finest he ever ate. John of course found them not quite enough done. In the evening went to Brookline to bid Stephen Perkins good-by; he sails on Monday, wished to be remembered, hoped to see us in Italy next summer.

Ward brings sad accounts of mother's health, her cough is wasting her away fast; she thinks she cannot remain much longer. I am glad

I can go up now on her account. Ward says she hardly expects to see Charles and Rush again; they will sail from Liverpool the 20th of September. We shall go up this afternoon; shall leave the keys and silver at the P—s. John gathered the peaches this morning, I gave them to Mrs. P. They were all ripe, and would have been lost while we are away. Good-by.

Ever yours,

SEP.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## EUROPE AGAIN.

WE sailed for Liverpool in the Niagara, Aug. 2, 1854. We were a party of six. At the time of sailing Seth seemed very unwell and full of heavy, sad forebodings that he should never see the old home again. But the anxieties of leaving over, and once afloat, he became calm and cheerful, bearing the tedium of the voyage patiently, and helping those who were more ill than he.

He seemed quite well and happy in England, which he enjoyed very much. He liked the soft climate, the sense of comfort in travelling, and the mellow beauty of the landscape. The National Gallery was full of interesting memories of his early life in London, when he studied there the first great pictures he had ever seen.

We passed rather rapidly to Antwerp and up the Rhine, which was familiar ground to him, and hastened to Veyteaux on the Lake of Geneva. Here he enjoyed for two weeks freedom from care, and the glorious scenery of the lake and mountains. We often walked to the neighboring village of Montreux, and bought a basket of delicious fruit, with the intention of taking it home to the family. On our way back we stopped at the bath-house, and then climbed to the little picturesque church, where we sat and rested, and enjoyed the view, and tasted of the fruit so thoroughly that there was usually the same errand to be done on the morrow.

We then went to Chamouni by Martigny and the Tête Noir,

and from thence to Geneva. He made no record of this journey, but he found his wonted refreshment and delight in nature. He often walked up the hills with his brother when the others rode on mules. The ride over the Jura Mountains in a carriage was full of novelty and interest, and we reached Paris early in October. Seth was very fond of Paris, where he had spent many months in study in the days of early enthusiasm; and all the sadness which he experienced there could not wholly destroy his enjoyment of its beauty. During the few weeks that his sister remained with him and while the weather was fine, much of his time was given to seeing the sights of Paris and the environs, but he also engaged a studio and began to paint. He went frequently to the Louvre, and especially studied Titian's portrait of Francis the First, which he considered a masterpiece. He drew a portrait in crayon for his sister, and a slight sketch in charcoal of a very old man, but he took no commissions for any work. He made a copy of Parmigianino's head of St. Lucia from the engraving, as a study in color. It is very warmly colored, with a light crimson robe, rich auburn hair, and that peculiarly brilliant complexion which always accompanies it. That this style of color attracted him is shown by another unfinished head, a duplicate of one of his crayon drawings, which has the same tone of color and complexion. He also painted a portrait of his brother John, which is very low in tone and somewhat severe in character. A young American artist, Mr. William G. Babcock, introduced him to the works of Jean François Millet, who was then just rising into fame. Before leaving home Seth saw his "Reapers," in the possession of Mr. Martin Brimmer, and was very much interested in the naturalness and intense earnestness of this artist. He made a faithful copy of a small picture owned by Mr. Babcock, representing a nymph in the woods. This picture is in Millet's earlier manner, before he began his great humanitarian representations of labor. A few sketches

and beginnings of pictures of Miss Clark and myself, made in leisure evenings, and a beautiful little female head modelled in wax are all that remain of his winter's studies.

He visited the ateliers of both Henri and Ary Scheffer. He went very little into society, but occasionally met Mr. Story, Mr. Cranch, Mr. Eastman Johnson, and other American artists. At the house of his old friend George P. Healy, he always found a warm welcome and a simple happy home life which gave him great satisfaction. One great social pleasure came from the frequent visits of his old friend, M. Dubourjal.

He enjoyed greatly the fine music in the churches, especially at the Madeleine and St. Roch. But all these studies and pleasures were interrupted by illness. In December he was suddenly seized with the "grippe," and suffered excruciating pain for some days. His recovery was slow, and when able to rise from his bed he was still very weak and nervous. He longed for home, but when we talked over plans of return, his love of art prevailed, and we decided to go to Italy instead, trusting that the change of scene and climate would benefit him. But after passports were signed and preparations made, Miss Clark, who was to remain in Paris, was taken ill, and we could not leave her. Her disease was typhoid fever. She was attended by the celebrated Dr. Jahr, with able consulting physicians. The fever abated, but appetite and strength never returned. Her spirit wandered sometimes in beautiful fancies, sometimes in distressing vagaries, and the end drew near. Every kindness was shown her by American friends in Paris; and she had a devoted English nurse. Her homesickness passed away, and she was happy in the presence of friends about her. When told that death was near, she said, "I am sorry to leave my father, but I shall see my mother," and then gave directions for the disposal of her little treasures. When a friend bent over for the last kiss, and her soft curls touched her face, she looked up and said, "She is one

of the angels," and at every interval of consciousness she asked to have us all about her, and at night she went to sleep.

This rarely beautiful nature made a deep impression of respect and love on all who knew her. She was at once the most sensitive and the most upright person I ever knew. Feeling that money had been given her to cultivate her art, she carried economy to the verge, not of meanness, for she had no tinge of that, but of injury to her own health and welfare. In the half year that she passed with us she bought nothing for herself but a pair of shoes and a pair of gloves, and would have lived on bread and apples if we would have allowed it. Although it came sadly too late she welcomed the token of confidence and appreciation in a letter from Mr. S. G. Ward, the treasurer of the School of Design, appointing her as permanent teacher, and securing her funds for another year of study. Yet she seemed one of those not fitted to live in this world ; her body was very frail, and her mind almost too delicately strung to bear the rough winds of earth. She was like a lark who sings its heavenly morning melody and then rises upward out of sight.

Seth felt this parting deeply, and all the painful details of necessary business in a strange country were very trying to him, yet he bore himself calmly and bravely, and took all the labor and care he possibly could. I had been very ill, and had only recovered sufficiently to ride out when Jeanie died, but was again prostrated by nervous suffering and confined to the bed for some days. Dr. Jahr advised our immediately quitting Paris, and Seth's recollections turned to Fontainebleau, where he had sought health before. We went thither about the 20th of March. At Fontainebleau he visited the palace and enjoyed the frescos of Francia, and we amused ourselves with feeding the fat carp in the pond. He was interested to find his former lodgings and his old landlady. When at last the good Mlle. Marguerite, bent with age, recognized him, she expressed great delight, for

she had felt sure when he left her that he would not live to reach home. She showed us the window to which the ass used to be brought up for him to drink the milk, and they recalled a thousand pleasant little circumstances. He went again to see her, to carry her some candy for her cough, and to say good-by.

One day, Mr. Cheney and Mr. Babcock walked through the forest about seven miles to Barbizon, to see Millet and his works. I had been engaged in the sad task of writing to friends at home, and I shall never forget the fresh life and delight with which he came into my room. In Millet he found the artist who answered to his own conceptions of his sacred calling,— a man simple in his life and habits as the meanest peasant, who had studied all that could be learned of art, and who used his skill and genius to express the noblest thoughts of the human soul. He described the painter's family, his happy domestic circle, and the picturesque little town in which he dwelt.

The next day we rode over to Barbizon and remained there a few weeks. Barbizon had not then attained much celebrity, but several artists were living there. Rousseau, the landscape painter, was Millet's dear friend; Jaques was making his beautiful etchings; and William M. Hunt, William Babcock, and some other artists, spent summers there. It was as primitive as any of the French villages described by George Sand. There was neither church nor school-house, bank office nor railroad, nor even a spring carriage in the town. The women carried their produce to market on donkeys, and went to the forest to gather fagots. The houses were thatched and covered with vines and stone-crop; the yards accommodated the hay-stack, the manure-heap, and the chickens. All the business of the town was transacted in the bar-rooms of the two little inns. Madame Vannier's, where we stayed, was a two-story structure, and our room overlooked the yard. As the dining-saloon, although ornamented with original works by the painters, was cold and

cheerless, we lived and ate in our room, which had a curtained alcove for the bed. Our large fireplace was filled with stumps from the forest, and instead of the greasy preparation of the cook, we had our potatoes roasted in the ashes. Excellent coffee, eggs, chickens, rabbits, custards, and stewed prunes made up the rest of the diet, and we took turns in toasting the black bread by the fine bed of coals.

We spent the time till dinner in the forest, gathering the early spring flowers, and watching the lizards crawl out from their winter's sleep.

We saw but little of Millet, who was ill with a severe cough, but we all went to his studio one morning. Dressed in the ordinary peasant costume, wearing wooden sabots, with his dark eyes and hair and full beard, his appearance was very impressive and inspired confidence and respect. The studio was large and well lighted. We saw there the touching picture of "Tobit watching for the Return of Young Tobias,"\* and several of his scenes from peasant life, all of them full of deep thought and feeling. But most of all was Seth interested in the picture, then unfinished, of "The Laborer." It spoke to the very heart. The workman stood alone, leaning upon his spade. The long furrow which he had dug since morning told of his ceaseless toil. He paused a moment to wipe the sweat off his brow, and every limb and muscle fell into a position of utter weariness. The lonely plain gave him no companionship, the cold gray sky no gleam of hope. It filled him with thoughts of the first curse upon labor, of the slavery which then debased our own country, of the toiling sufferers of Europe. The tears were in Millet's eyes, and he said to Mr. Babcock that he was deeply touched by Seth's sympathy, and gratified that he said no word of praise or spoke of the execution of his pictures. Although very different in their

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\* Now in the Art Museum.



work, they recognized each other as kindred. Seth said, "I do not care if I never see him again. I am perfectly satisfied with him."

Mr. Babcock introduced Mr. Cheney to a young peasant-girl who was accustomed to sit to artists as a model for the head. Adèle was an illegitimate child, the granddaughter of an old weaver, whom she supported by her work. She had a thoughtful German face, which seemed to mirror the suffering her mother must have known. She was shy and modest as a hare, and would not lift her eyes. He drew her in charcoal in her peasant costume, and felt that it was almost impossible to give the exquisite delicacy of her features. Theodore Parker said he "never drew a finer stroke," and Miss Curtis said, "It is Gretchen in 'Faust.'" He saw the resemblance and proposed some time to paint it.

Although Seth experienced much happiness at Barbizon, he was very far from well; he suffered continually from severe noises in the head, with deafness, and his throat and head were often troublesome. We went back to Paris for a day or two, and then started on a short tour in Germany, Mr. Babcock still accompanying us. At Rheims, though very sad and suffering, the beauty of the Cathedral gave him great delight, as did also that of Strasburg and its beautiful environs. He felt better in a week of warm weather at Munich, and enjoyed exploring the old print-shops with Babcock. In the gallery he specially enjoyed the Peruginos, and the "Apostles" of Albert Dürer. The "Beggar Boys" of Murillo gave him hearty enjoyment. He would stand before the picture of the old grandmother combing the boy's head, while he plays with a dog and munches an apple, and say, "He is having too good a time."

The day at Nuremberg was cold and stormy, and Seth suffered severely in his ear, so that he could visit only a few of the principal places. But he was deeply moved by

the works of Dürer, and counted the knowledge which he gained of him as the best result of his German tour. He afterward bought the engravings of the "Little Passion," from which he gathered great comfort and strength. We hastened on to Dresden, where he took advice of a physician, who prescribed rest and quiet. It was some days before he dared to visit the gallery, and then it was cheerless and cold; but the old spirit arose when he saw that "finest outgush of Raphael's soul," the Madonna di San Sisto. He said that "the angels below seemed to have forgotten their own superior nature in their adoration of the glorious child."

By Dr. Kinzelmann's advice he went to Loschwitz on the Elbe, and remained a fortnight, but he could not find the charm of Barbizon here. He suffered intense agony from his ear, which was somewhat relieved by the discharge of an ulcer, but he never had full relief from the noise till the last hour of his life. Dr. Kinzelmann advised a sea-voyage, and he decided to sail directly from Bremen, for America. When fairly started for America, he gave way to a transport of delight. The voyage was long and tedious, and he suffered more from sea-sickness than usual. He had not the habit of light reading, and could not wile away the time with novels. Some comic German woodcuts proved a great resource, and we had some fine music from Miss Elise Hensler and others.

We arrived in New York, June 6, and had a beautiful view of Staten Island as we came up the harbor, by sunset light.

## CHAPTER IX.

## LAST JOYS AND SORROWS.

IN his old home, with the burden of care taken off, with his brothers and sisters about him, and his friend Kimberley to amuse and cheer him, amid the beauty of June, and with all the comforts of New England life, I hoped he would find rest and strength, and left him for a short time to visit my mother, but the accounts I received of his health made me hasten back.

He remained in Manchester all summer. He worked a little, making a very lovely crayon sketch of his niece, Rosalie Goodman, and beginning a picture in oil, which is the most beautiful thing he has left in color; while his portrait of his brother John has something of the severe manner of Page, this has all the tenderness and beauty of Allston's best works. It remains to show what he would have done had health and life been granted him.

He rode every day and enjoyed the old familiar beauty, and loved to point out the picturesque resources of New England's scenery and inhabitants.

He talked much of the expression of landscape, which he thought had not yet been fully brought out. A place on his favorite ride suggested a picture of death, a dark sluggish pool bordered with cypress and fringed with long hanging moss, while a companion picture, full of hope and morning, should represent life.

He was much interested in building a studio on the grounds, and made various plans for it, once suggesting a stone ruin, but he ended by putting up a very plain wooden building. A new

chamber for the old house was also desired, and he wished to do much of the work himself, hoping to derive benefit from the exercise. His health did not improve, he suffered constantly from the noise in the head, from severe pain in his limbs, and irritation of the bowels. In August, however, he began the work on the studio by the side of the little brook, which is connected with all the fortunes of the family, and it was a great relief to his nervous anxiety. On the 8th of September a great joy came to him in the birth of his daughter. He received the gift with the profoundest gratitude. By his desire the baby was named Margaret Swan. He would sit and gaze upon the child without speaking, as if to assure himself of the reality of her presence, or as if he felt how short would be the time he could enjoy her.

A few days after he went to Boston to take care of the casts which had been sent from Europe. He visited his friend Mr. Gould, and also Mrs. Forbes at Milton. He was very unwell while there, and returned with the trouble in the throat very much increased.

He walked and rode through the autumn, and it was interesting to see how much beauty he found in the brown seed-vessels, which he gathered into bouquets, and how much he saw even in barren fields and cloudy skies. The child was a constant source of delight, and he counted himself deeply aggrieved if he was not called to see her dressed and undressed, that he might watch her unfolding charms.

He went to Boston just before Thanksgiving, where he consulted his old friend, Dr. Putnam, who gave him some temporary relief. By his advice he went to his sister's, in New York, for a few weeks, but he did not gain in health; the constant inclination to clear his throat, the shortness of breath, the general weakness, became very alarming.

He returned on Christmas-day, and at New Year's we took

rooms at the United States Hotel. We were very pleasantly situated here; his friends, the Kimberleys, were in the house, and we had our meals in private. He enjoyed the baby fully, and tried to draw her picture, but strength was wanting. He walked daily, and occasionally rode out to Roxbury in an omnibus for the sake of the air. When his brothers John and Ward came to Boston in February, they found him no better, and urged his return to Manchester. He seemed to revive a little by the change, and was very glad to be at home. "Now, I feel that I could either live or die, here." He became very much interested in politics. He had never voted but once, from a youthful enthusiasm for Gen. Jackson, but now that politics wore a moral aspect, he was very much interested in the Kansas question, and much pleased at the idea of Fremont's nomination for the Presidency. He wanted a young growing man in the office. He attempted a little carpentering for amusement, but did not draw or paint. Mr. Kimberley began a bust, and he was much interested in his progress. "It will be the last," he said. It delighted him when the baby began to recognize him, and he was very proud when she cried after him. He would say in the morning, "We have another day with her." In the warm spring days he would sit on the piazza with the child in his lap, and feed the little "chipping birds" who came hopping about. The child's nurse at that time was an extremely pretty young girl, and the two together made a succession of pictures, which gave him great pleasure. One night the nurse could not get her to sleep, and he told her to bring the child to him. She nestled in his arms at once, and sobbed herself to sleep, and I found him looking at her with his eyes full of tears.

He said, "When I was so ill before, I felt that I could not die, but now that I have every joy I could ask for in life, I feel that I can leave it."

When Charles Sumner made the great speech in Congress, to which Brooks replied by his brutal assault, Seth was very much excited. He would talk of it the first thing in the morning, and he discussed the whole matter in every light. He was impatient for the newspapers, and when the Transcript brought a report of Emerson's speech, he felt with great delight that the right word had got spoken, and he cut out the slip and carried it in his pocket. It seemed to give him rest, to show how even this horrible outrage could be nobly borne.

One day, the last of June, his brother Rush by a sudden impulse, asked him to go up and dine with him. It was the last meal he took away from home. He felt very near to this brother, and spoke of the beautiful spiritual communion he had with him.

Soon after he suffered severely from cramps, first in the leg and afterwards in the chest, so that at one time he could not lie down for many hours. Sometimes his wonderful fortitude gave way, and he groaned aloud, but his patience and love never failed. He never became irritable, but was constantly grateful for every attention.

He was only able now to sit in his large chair by the door and look out upon the green earth, and to have the baby in his lap with a green twig to "brush the flies off papa."

In Paris he had bought a picture by William M. Hunt, a portrait of a little French girl. It was sent home at this time, and he enjoyed it very much. He often said, "I am glad we have got it." Once he said, "I don't know but it does me harm, it keeps me thinking so about art." One very hot day he suffered from extreme pain, and at evening he asked me to read to him Bryant's poem "The Evening Wind." As I did so the pain passed away, the heat slackened, and he experienced deep peaceful enjoyment. He could bear but little reading, but enjoyed some passages from Fénelon, of which he said, "I think they do me good."

One day his sister began speaking about the engravings he had made from Allston. This led to a conversation about Allston, and Seth's own work, which excited and exhausted him so much that he sent his sister away. I found him with the tears flowing from his eyes. He said, "When I think of those men, and that I have seen and known one of them; when I feel what a glorious thing art is—" He could not finish his sentence. It was almost his last word on art. I once said to him, "You speak extravagantly about other things, saying 'It is the best you ever saw in your life,' etc., but in regard to art a few words as, 'It is very well' are a great deal from you. Why is it?" "Is it so?" he said; "it must be because art is so sacred."

Early in September he was relieved from pain, and slightly braced by cooler airs, and a gleam of hope came, but it soon passed away. He felt that the change was surely coming, and one morning he woke with the dark shadow of the valley upon him, and could not see the child he must leave. But in that hour the bitterness of death passed, and he then spoke of his brother Wells's influence on his daughter, and said, "It makes me sure that I shall be as near to her as I could be in life." His desire to go out of doors this morning was so great that he was wrapped up and placed in his large chair, and his brothers lifted it out of the door, and set it down in the path. It was a glorious September day, still and warm, and the sun shone gently on the dear familiar scene, through the leaves just touched with yellow. He looked up and down the valley, at Ward who was beside him, then turned to look for me and said, "I could die now." At night he said, "Though this morning began so terribly it has been a very happy day."

He was thus taken out two days more. Sunday morning, as I recognized a symptom which seemed to me fatal, his eye met mine, and a look of rapture passed over his face. "What makes me so glad?" he said; "now I know there is no doubt." Doubt

had always been his great enemy. "He who doubts is damned," he often said; "there is no need of any future punishment." John soon after brought him a piece of a very fine water-melon. He tasted it and said, "It is the last! it is good enough to be the last." He asked me to eat with him, and his child must taste it too. He had no delirium, the only wavering of the brain was a sense of double consciousness. He would say when drinking, "It seems as if this other one got everything."

On the 8th of September his brother Rush's wife gave birth to a little daughter; he was interested in the event, remembered that it was his own baby's birthday, and said she must have his silver cup. The next day he craved some cider, and it excited him so much that he felt as if it might save him. He said, "I am going to take just as much as I want, it is a crisis in my life." Some fine peaches were brought him; he enjoyed their beauty, but could not taste them. "You eat them," he said. Many were around him and he was much excited. "Oh, don't send anybody away!" he said. He had a severe fainting-fit in the afternoon. Ward watched with us that night. The old noise in the ear left him no quiet. At last he said, "Keep very quiet, — it is all still, I can hear now." Fatal signs appeared, but he fell into a quiet sleep. John took Ward's place. He woke and said, "I am cold." I threw a blanket over him and gave him a spoonful of warm tea. "Wait!" he said. It was his last word, — a significant one. The nurse brought the baby in; he recognized her, and also his dear Aunt Emily. He seemed to try to speak, but could not. They said, "He is gone," but I *waited*; he opened those glorious eyes, and the soul that never dies looked out of them at us once more.

In one of his last days he said, "I think my sins are all forgiven, for they do not trouble me now." He also said, "I do not feel a particle of hate toward any human being."

Wednesday, Sept. 10, 1856.



Seth had always disliked much funeral ceremony, and we would have wished to lay the worn-out body quietly in the earth, but the thought of the offence it might give to friends decided us against it. We telegraphed to ask Theodore Parker if he would come. The answer was in one word, "Certainly." The service was delayed two days that his brother Ralph might be sent for from the West. But on Thursday it became evident that the burial ought not to be delayed, and at eventide his brothers bore him to the old burial-ground, where he had often looked to his resting-place, under the old oak-tree. Only the nearest relations went. The moonlight was veiled by soft mists, and nature was all in harmony with his peaceful euthanasy.

The next day a funeral service\* was held at the old house. A few friends came from New York and Boston, and Mr. Parker made an address. The village choir sang the hymn, "There is a balm for souls distressed."

Mr. Parker said, "If I did not believe in the two great truths of religion, the goodness of God and the faith in immortality, I should not dare to come here to-day to stand on the grave of so many buried hopes, and to look into your sorrowful faces." He spoke of Seth's genius, of his love, of his purity, and of his soul, to which "religion was as native as the air."

Mr. Cheney left no will, as his property would legally go to his wife and child, as he would have wished. He made some requests in regard to his pictures, which were fulfilled as nearly as possible.

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\* This service, apart from the material burial, has been perpetuated in the family, — only that it has since taken place before, instead of after the actual interment, the family retaining the remains as long as they think best, and then going quietly by themselves to the cemetery. It enables all friends and relations to pay honor to the deceased, and to gather consolation and strength from a religious service, without the painful ceremonies of a funeral procession.

## CHAPTER X.

## ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER AND WORKS.

TO those who did not know Seth Cheney, it is impossible to give a full idea of the traits which made him so inestimably precious and dear to all who knew him well. Such hold him as one of those rare natures which forever make life rich and beautiful to us, and immortality a fact. Exquisitely sensitive in his nervous organization, like a musical instrument he thrilled to every touch, and though often suffering keenly, he was quite as capable of a happiness which radiated like sunshine upon those who breathed his atmosphere. Life was no smooth, unruffled sea for him; it was swept with stormy gusts of will and passion, but they were always airs from heaven which purified. If led to any expression of excitement, however righteous, he suffered for days until the serenity of his soul was restored. He had great self-control, often hiding intense feeling by an almost unnatural calmness, yet he was free and spontaneous and sympathetic,—a deep perennial spring which seemed to gush forth freely for all to partake of, yet which could never be exhausted and never revealed its hidden source.

He could not live in petty relations; everything had infinite spiritual meaning to him. Yet he was no ascetic, but full of interest in life, and nature, and practical every-day work. Eating was a delicate, refined pleasure; his sense was so keen that the natural flavor of the simplest food, as rice, grains, fruit, gave him exquisite enjoyment. He liked to cook a beefsteak for himself

and some friend, and as he did so, to tell how the priests ate the meat they had first sacrificed to the gods. He loved mechanical work, and was skilful in it, always meeting the want of the moment with some ingenious contrivance.

He was entirely free from conventionalism or affectation. Among the rich and cultivated his simplicity was welcome and fit; the poor and lowly never felt that he condescended to them, only that he sympathized with and blessed them. Loving to listen and listening sympathetically, he was unconscious of his power in conversation, yet he seemed to illumine every subject he touched upon; in modestly seeking information he imparted his own insight. His love of children was fully returned by them. Even in a strange country children have crept to his side and taken his hand in the streets, or lain down to sleep by his chair. Many thought of him as

"Too bright and good  
For human nature's daily food."

A little girl, on hearing that he was to be married, said, "Was Shakespeare married?" and, touching his soft beard, she said, "What pretty feathers!" But nothing pained him like exaggerated praise, which only wakened the more his feeling of self-distrust; sometimes, when it was fulsome, he replied with sarcasm. "Send us another genius like yourself," said a lady who had flattered him *ad nauseam*, as he was leaving a watering-place. "If I can catch one," he replied, laughing. With all this keen sensibility he was very brave both in bearing physical and mental pain, and in doing whatever was required of him. Mr. Morse says "he was a man of perfect courage." This was shown morally as well as physically. In relation as he was with many who thought so differently, he never shrank from avowing his sympathy with reforms, with anti-slavery, with liberal theology, and with woman suffrage. He was not dogmatic, but was always seeking new light, and on some questions,

such as the best means of checking intemperance, he had not decided opinions, but listened with interest to everything earnestly said on the subject, and so was often counted as endorsing what he only did not contradict.

His purity of character spoke in everything he said or did; he was true to the knightly vow of chastity which he and his friend pledged to each other in youth.

All these qualities appeared in his art, which was the expression of his own soul. To him art was neither a trade nor an amusement, but a sacred vocation. He always said, "Art is for expression," and, keenly sensitive as he was to beauty, he did not feel that to be the only object in art. He said to Gould in his last illness, "This is one world, and art is another."

His great power was in the expression of character in individual heads. He never attempted historical or genre painting, and only rarely grouped two or more heads together. Sculpture attracted him, and some of his friends thought his genius pointed strongly that way; but the only original works remaining are a medallion likeness of Mr. A. Bronson Alcott, life-size, a bust of Miss Helen P. Littlehale, left unfinished and cast after his death, a small female head in wax, and a bas-relief of his brother John. These show the same qualities and power as his drawings; the exquisite modelling of the features in the bust reminds one of the Greek, and the small head is graceful as Raphael. His studies in modelling were of great service in his drawing. Landscape-drawing was a recreation in which his fine feeling of light and shadow had full play.

He loved color, but he has left very few paintings. In his last visit to Europe, however, he made it a special study, and a copy from Millet, a study in color made from Domenichino's "St. Lucia," and the unfinished portrait of Rosalie show how pure and delicate was his feeling. As another artist said, "The man who did those *could* have done anything.

But he is best known by his portrait heads drawn in crayon, which form by far the greater part of his work, and which are unsurpassed by any others in this style. "You draw in crayon, like Cheney," said a lady to Rowse. "I draw in crayon, but not like Cheney," he replied; "nobody draws like Cheney."

He worked in Boston during the period of Transcendentalism and his portraits of the men and women of that day preserve for us the spirit of that inspired epoch when liberality of thought and enthusiasm for culture were added to that moral intensity which animated reforms. Emerson, Hawthorne, and W. H. Channing are on the list of his commissions, but ill-health prevented him from fulfilling them. It has often been said that he refused to draw Daniel Webster because of his moral character. I do not think this is true. He had engaged to give him a sitting, but circumstances prevented the fulfilment of the engagement, and he rejoiced, because he shrank from the effort to render a character so oppressively powerful and out of his special range of sympathies. But he was not apt to assume the post of censor, and while deeply regretting Mr. Webster's course in his later years, he fully appreciated his genius and felt his death keenly.

He loved old age and delighted to portray it. His pictures of his mother, his two aunts, and his uncle are among his most admirable heads. Of his uncle he said "that he had one money eye and one benevolent one," and he would often show the difference by covering one or the other. His intuitive insight into character enabled him to represent the real depth and permanent quality of the nature, so that his portraits of children continue to resemble them in full maturity. And no artist ever more truly idealized his portraits, always giving the noblest and best expression. One of his friends criticised the portrait of a young relative as too exalted. "She is not capable of that." "She is," the artist asserted. Soon after, her relative saw her under

emotion which called out all her best feelings, and there was the expression that Cheney had given her. Of one lady he said, "It is impossible to make a portrait of her; she does not put her character into her face." Equally beautiful are his portraits of children; perhaps the rarest of all the Rosalie, his beautiful niece of two years old. More than one has said that among all the beautiful babes in the galleries of Europe there is none *like* this; as another artist said, "This is American, it is intellectual innocence." Every mother's heart is touched as she looks on it, and thinks it is like the child who is an angel in heaven. Gould says, "I have searched and missed in all the galleries of Europe a face of more ethereal beauty than Seth's Rosalie." The only sitters he did not like were cold, inexpressive, regular beauties. To a handsome lady of middle age he once impatiently said, "I can't draw you; you have neither the wrinkles of age nor the beauty of youth." Another lady wished him to draw her aunt, saying, "I know she is very homely, but cannot you draw her a little lightly, tenderly?" He succeeded fully in giving her the aunt she loved in spite of the homeliness.

He was fond of books rather than a voluminous reader. He often regretted that he could not relieve the tension of his brain by light reading, but he seldom cared for a novel unless something as full of thought as "Consuelo" or "Wilhelm Meister." Milton was his travelling companion, and crossed the ocean with him every time. He was very fond of Wordsworth, and the "Ode to Duty" was his favorite poem. But the Italian poets were even more to him than the English, especially Dante and Michael Angelo. He said the sonnets were as great as the Sistine Chapel.

Quaint old books like Feltham's "Resolves" and Browne's "Religio Medici" were frequently in his hands, and Emerson's writings, especially "Nature," were his constant delight. Though he passed many hours of seeming inaction, his mind was always

busy, always thinking of his work. "I never see two sticks lying together," he said, "but I am considering what angle they make and what proportion they bear to each other." This sense of relation and proportion was always in his mind; "The head cannot be right if the background is wrong," he said.

His taste in art was wide and catholic, yet discriminating.

Michel Angelo stood first, and far above all others. He never spoke of him without profound reverence, but loved to tell anecdotes of him, of his methods of work, and of his attachment to his old servant. He especially admired the "Christ."

Of Raphael he was also very fond, and his own work has been oftener compared to Raphael's than to any other. He was much offended by Ruskin's flippant talk about "the fall of Raphael."

He was very fond of Correggio. Having been detained at Parma by his friend Gray's illness, he studied him faithfully, and appreciated the beauty of his light and shadow, and the sunny joyous beauty and high religious inspiration of his pictures.

Claude was a great favorite. Yet, idealist as he was in the fullest and best sense of the term, he fully appreciated the breadth, truth, and humor of the Dutch School, and the power of Rembrandt. So, too, of Velasquez and Murillo, whose best works in Spain he never saw. He revered Albert Dürer very highly, and during his last visit to Germany found great strength and comfort in his pictures.

Of contemporary European artists, two moved him very deeply, — David Scott, whom he knew by his "Pilgrim's Progress" and "Monograms of Man" as well as by his Life and Poems; and Jean François Millet, of whom I have spoken elsewhere. The noble religious strength of Millet was entirely satisfactory to him. Allston was very dear to him both as an artist and as a friend, and he always classed him among the immortals.

He was gentle in his criticisms of other artists, and utterly free from all jealousy, giving lessons and sympathy and encouragement freely. But he would not lower his standard of art, for he felt that was one of our greatest dangers.\* “Nothing discourages me so much,” he said, “as the ease with which people are satisfied.” He was anxious to have a collection of good statues in Boston, and, in connection with Mr. James Russell Lowell, started a project for this purpose, and made a list of the casts for it, but, owing to financial embarrassments, nothing was done at that time. He was very fond of music, and although he never mastered any instrument, he loved to play chords on the organ or piano, which he did with great expression. He felt that the influence of music on character was not sufficiently estimated. Of a young lady he said once, “She has not gained, and I think it is owing to the influence of the music she has been hearing.” Mozart and Beethoven were his favorite masters, and he delighted also in the old church music, especially Pergolesi’s *Stabat Mater*. He loved to have music when he was working, and his friend Kimberley added much to his happiness in this way.

Kimberley says:—

“Art with him was intuitive; his studio everywhere and every *when*. Perhaps De la Roche and Camuccini might give him some rules, but the divine power we see in his pictures as also in his conversation was in himself; if he touched a leaf or a twig, he beautified it. . . . He seemed to me to have wings that I could rest under.”

One friend says of his eyes, “I have looked up into their deeps as into a kind of heaven.” Another said, “Other people seem to me beautiful because they are good, but he seems to me good because he is so beautiful.”

Mr. Gould says:—

“His mind was synthetic, intuitive, imaginative, deductive; began with spiritual truths, took in harmonies, was impatient of processes,

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\* He would not buy a friend’s pictures if they were not faithful in drawing.



seldom needed them to arrive at his object. Saw truth in vision ; with all, there was a certain impermanence in his mental impressions, by fault of literary training, which induced him to think the same problem over and over again, and this circular movement sometimes banished repose." And again, "Retzsch's picture of the youth with Pegasus is a true portrait of Seth."

Speaking of the strict Puritan influence of Connecticut, Mr. Gould says :—

"Beloved without measure by man and woman as he was, only this central rectitude, so fortified, could have kept him from error, and adjusted the relations of his blameless and beneficent life."

Of his instruction in his art he says :—

"It was illuminated by pithy apothegms of art, which he would utter in his brief, sententious way : 'Look to the general effect. What then ! Then it is done. Don't rivet your mind to your work ; care less for it and you will succeed.'

"He was no ascetic, but æsthetic, sensuous, humane, delighting in color with the true temper of an artist who makes 'a bridal of the earth and sky.' He liked artists, — Jo Ames, Staigg, Kimberley, Gray, Greenough, all of them — and tried to promote good-fellowship.

"His speech was brief, but his conversation complete, made out by looks, tones, manners, presence."

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER WRITTEN IN 1852, BY S. W. CHENEY.

I cannot let the Sunday pass, the good Sunday, that comes so punctually every week, and sits so quietly among the seven days, and then retires so serenely and leaves the rest of the days to hobble on and fret themselves for a whole week. The thought of you is to me like a serene Sabbath, and comes to me as a rest in a weary life. The thought — how much there is in the thought of love — the love that suggests the "Infinite love," what repose there is in that ! Whether the object is present or absent, that remains and is immortal.

PARIS, 64 Rue de la Rochefoucauld, Oct. 5, 1878.

MY DEAR MRS. CHENEY, — It was a very great pleasure to have seen yourself and daughter, who is so like her late gifted father and

my early friend, of whose memory I have the most charming remembrances both as a man and an artist. I have always said and strongly felt that no one has treated the head of woman so nobly in my time, and indeed even amongst the drawings of the old masters the only one that occurs to me to mention in comparison is that of our Lord by Leonardo da Vinci. About Cheney's heads there was an exquisite charm entirely and all his own; this was also the case with him as a man whose sympathetic nature and pure simplicity of life made all love him who had the good fortune to really know him.

In the winter of 1832 I first met the brothers John and Seth Cheney. I was presented to them by my ever since very dear friend John C. Crossman, the clever artist. I well remember some beautiful works by these three friends; one head by Seth particularly touched me. We next saw each other in the summer of 1834, studying in the Louvre. I made some copies, and have often thought since how much more wisely he passed his time by working more with his head than with his brush. We again met in London in 1838, on his return from Italy. Eight years after, in Boston, I saw with delight his admirable works, and renewed my relations with him, his brother John, and my still earlier friend Crossman.

GEO. P. A. HEALY.

Mr. Healy once said, "No man living understands the play of light and shadow as he does."

A friend one day found him reading a French Testament, "because," he explained, "the task set me to read it in English in my youth made it hateful, and obscured the meaning. We shall be Christians by and by, when we come to know the Author truly."

"He was a man, take him for all in all,  
I shall not look upon his like again."

## NOTE.

## PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE earliest portrait of Mr. Cheney is a miniature painted by his friend Dubourjal, in 1834. It is very harmonious and pleasing in color, and gives a true impression of his pure and delicate youthful beauty.

A drawing of his own represents him at a little later period, but before he wore the full beard.

Mr. Gray painted a portrait for the Academy, of which I have spoken elsewhere.

Mr. Healey painted a portrait in the winter of 1853.

Mr. Gould modelled a small bust from life, and afterwards a larger one from memory ; but perhaps his most striking reminiscence of his friend is in his noble ideal bas-relief of the Ghost in Hamlet.

His friend Mr. Kimberley has made various attempts to represent him fitly both in sculpture, on canvas, and in crayon, before and since his death.

The portrait of which I have the pleasure of giving a carbon photograph in this memoir, was drawn by him during the past winter, from a small daguerrotype taken about the time of his second marriage, in 1853. The loving interest he has felt in this work, and the unwearied care he has bestowed upon it, have been rewarded with success, for this may truly be pronounced to be the most faithful portrait of Mr. Cheney existing, both in feature and expression.

The vignette on the title-page represents the old homestead in which he was born, — not as it was then, but as it was at the time of his death, it not having been altered since then in any important respect.

The carbon photographs are from two of his original drawings, — the first the Maria or Roman Girl, and the second the Rosalie. After repeated trials this process gave the best reproduction of the beauty of the originals.

The heliotype, number one, is from a drawing of an old man in Rome; and number two is from the portrait of Miss Ednah D. Smith, drawn at Dublin, N. H., in 1851.

The original color of the paper on which his drawings were made was often unfavorable to photography, and this difficulty has been increased by the effect of time in making the tints unequal, yet I think all will feel gratified at so great a measure of success as has been secured by the care and skill of those who have had charge of these illustrations.

JAMAICA PLAIN, April 5, 1881.













